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# JERUSALEM

PALESTINIAN WEEKLY

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**TO OUR READERS:**

**In compliance with the Israeli military authorities, and under the guise of the much critic Al-Fajr is required to submit all material prepared for publication in this weekly, and also in .... Edition, to the Israeli censorship authorities, who use this blanket authority excessively. The material appearing on pa... with letters has all been censored and expunged by the Israeli authorities. We found it necessary and relevant to publish it on these pages in the foreign edition.**

# Israeli Terror Group Wounds Two in Bethany

An Israeli terrorist group "Terror Against Terror" bombed a Christian and a Muslim religious institution in a Jerusalem suburb, December 20, wounding a Cypriot nun and a Palestinian *imam*. Israeli papers said that the grenades used were of a type used by the Israeli Army. A third grenade was discovered before it exploded.

Tariq Omar Hussein, 26, the *imam* of Bethany Mosque, is in critical condition, with head wounds, according to Makassed Hospital sources. Sister Abrexia Yerie, 47, who received less serious wounds, was released from hospital on the same day.

The professionally placed booby-trapped hand grenade exploded in the Mashru' Mosque shortly after 4:30 am. The Bethany Village Council head told reporters that Tariq Hussein found it when he opened his door on his way to call for morning prayers. The grenade was wrapped in carpeting outside his house. It blew up when he moved it, the council head said. The explosion shattered windows and tossed Hussein's furniture around the room.

Hussein was hit in the head, chest and legs and lay in a pool of his own blood until some worshippers arriving for prayer took him to hospital.

The second blast occurred at 1:15 in the garden of the nearby Greek Orthodox convent. A grenade was hidden under a pile of stones near the entrance to the convent. Abrexia Yerie accidently hit the grenade, setting it off. She received superficial leg wounds and was released from hospital later the same day.

The convent explosion shook the nearby Dar al-Aytam Professional Training School, terrifying students who reportedly thought they were under attack.

A third grenade was discovered before it went off at Nabi Elazar Mosque, near the church, during a search of the neighbourhood by police and soldiers.

Following the blasts, five military vehicles loaded with soldiers arrived in the village and began investigating the incident.

The police theory, according to Israeli newspapers, is that well-trained Israeli extremists are behind the attacks. *Al Quds* Palestinian daily quoted police sources as saying that the attackers must have been trained by the Israeli Army.

Shortly after the second explosion, an unidentified caller telephoned Israeli Army Radio and said "Terror Against Terror" was responsible for the bombings.

The bomb attacks were condemned by the Supreme Islamic Council (SIC), in Jerusalem, and Christian leaders.

Greek Catholic Bishop Lutfi Laham told *Al Fajr:* "Denouncing these attacks is no longer enough. Sectarianism and religious extremism only lead to the destruction of humanity."

**Sister Abrexia Yerie, left, and *Imam* Tariq Hussein, in hospital. Both were injured, the *imam* seriously, by grenades planted by an Israeli terror group in Bethany, December 20.**

Bishop Laham, who called for all people of good will to unite, said that "all we aim at is that human beings, whether Christian, Muslim, Jewish or Buddhist, live with dignity and pride."

In a statement issued in Jerusalem, following the incidents, SIC demanded protection for both Muslim and Christian institutions in the occupied territories. It charged that there had been a long list of attacks against such targets in which the attackers went unpunished.

Officials from the International Committee of the Red Cross went to Bethany, interviewed people and photographed the places where the bombs exploded. Mahmoud Haddad, a guard at al-Aqsa kindergarten school, told *Al Fajr* that this is the first time that bombs were exploded in Bethany, which is known as a quiet village.

Mahmoud Bazlamite, a Bethany blacksmith, told *Al Fajr* that he believes extremist Zionist settlers want to terrorise peaceful residents.

Last week, a Palestinian woman from the village of Husan, near Bethlehem, escaped injury after a grenade, booby-trapped in the same manner, exploded in front of her house. Israeli police and soldiers later discovered and detonated two bombs in the same village. Five hand grenades were discovered in Jerusalem, last week.

# Family Save House from Army Bombers

Four days after the demolition and sealing of six houses in Hebron and Ramallah, the Israeli High Court issued an order *nisi*, December 15, ordering the Israeli minister of defence not to summarily demolish or seal two houses belonging to the Abu Sneineh family in al-Thowri, Jerusalem. The family's sons have been arrested on suspicion of stabbing a settler in Hebron, last July. A court ruling on whether or not demolition is permissible will be announced later.

One month ago, Ziad Omar Abu Sneineh, his brother Hisham and Ain Ishaq Abu Sneineh were arrested and charged with participating in the stabbing of settler Aharon Gross, in central Hebron, along with six other Hebron and Ramallah residents. The houses of Mahmoud Sarsour, 70, Mohammed Seial, 75, in Hebron, and Nabil Mahmoud Shaban, in Jeeb, were demolished and the houses of Ramadan Dweik, Mahmoud Mohammed Abu Sneineh and Mahmoud Gheith were sealed by Israeli troops in pre-trial sweeps.

The Abu Sneineh youths were not accused of direct involvement in the stabbing.

Meanwhile, Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Arens said, December 19, that Israel will continue to use house demolition as a pre-trial punishment. "Every Israeli expert handling affairs in the West Bank agreed that demolishing houses is the most powerful deterrent measure available and is not to be dispensed with," Arens said in answering questions in the Knesset about the latest house razings.

Arens added that he has orderd a study of the subject and said that if it is found that demolishing houses fails to deter effectively, it shall be stopped.

WEEK OF DAILY ATTACKS

# Israelis Kill Civilian in S. Lebanon

Israeli occupation troops shot dead one Lebanese civilian and wounded three others in Sidon, December 18, after one of eight resistance attacks against Israeli forces in Lebanon during the week.

Six of the attacks occurred in Sidon, where the Israeli Army declared a continuous state of alert. Foreign journalists reported the town was "tense."

The latest attack occurred, December 22, at the southern entrance to Sidon. Paris-based *Monte Carlo Radio* reported Israeli troops surrounded the area and prevented journalists from checking the incident.

In the most serious incident, carried by *Agence France Presse*, December 18, a commando unit attacked an Israeli patrol in Sidon with hand grenades, rocket and automatic fire. The report, which was published in *Al Ittihad* the following day, said that one jeep was hit with a rocket and its three occupants killed or wounded. Israeli reinforcements then opened fire on pedestrians, killing one civilian and wounding three others. An Israeli military spokesperson later confirmed the attack, claiming that only two soldiers were wounded.

Following the jeep attack, occupation troops conducted a wide-scale search of the area, around Sidon, and arrested dozens of people.

In second attack, December 18, a remote-controlled device exploded near a group of Israeli military vehicles, three kilometres north of Nabatiya. *The Jerusalem Post* said the bomb consisted of 10 kilograms of TNT. An Israeli military spokesperson claimed there were no casualties.

Israel also suffered two casualties, December 20, when an Israeli command car drove over a land mine in the Jib Jnin area, in the eastern sector. The

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# PLO Sails From Tripoli

Five Greek ships flying UN flags and with French Navy escorts carried PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat and 4000 fighters out of Tripoli, December 20, thus ending the several-weeks siege of the city and speculation that Israel would attack the convoy. The PLO fighters sailed first to Larnaca, Cyprus, where 360 fighters disembarked for flights to Iraq. The others continued to expected destinations of Algeria, Tunsia and North Yemen. Palestinian officials in Cyprus told reporters that some fighters would go to Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

After weeks of speculation and several days of Israeli shelling of Tripoli, the departure of the PLO fighters from Tripoli started, December 20, at 2:30 pm. Five French Navy gunboats stationed five kilometres offshore and high-flying Israeli reconnaissance aircraft watched as the fighters, many accompanied by their wives and families, boarded the five Greek ships which had reached Tripoi that morning. Many of the fighters carried portraits of Arafat and fired volleys from automatic rifles as they left.

Squads of Lebanese policemen guarded the port area and Palestinian security forces checked the ships.

The smoothly executed evacuation came a day after the Greeks had received their second set of assurances for the safety of their vessels from Western powers. They were concerned after a week of daily shellings of the port area by Israeli gunboats off the coast.

According to Israeli reports, December 22, the cabinet was split over whether to attack the departing PLO fighters or not. Israeli reporters said Defence Minister Moshe Arens wanted confirmed pressure on the PLO while Premier Shamir agreed to abide by US demands that the fighters be allowed to leave Lebanon.

Kahlil Wazir (Abu Jihad), Arafat's deputy, told reporters as he boarded a departing ship: "We depart the city with great loyality to the great Lebanese people in our hearts. We will never forget the hardships which both the Palestinian and Lebanese people faced in Lebanon."

The 4000 fighters took with them personal weapons but had to leave artillery pieces behind. PLO sources said 75 percent of their heavy weapons were given to the *Tawhid Islami* (Islamic Unity) fighters in Tripoli. The rest went to the Lebanese Army units in the Tripoli area.

# Nervous MNF Shoot Own Side

by Livia Rokach
Our Rome Correspondent

The US Marines and the French Foreign Legion paratroopers stationed in Beirut are nervous. The Americans, despite the cover and the protection given to them by the most potent fleet in the world, are so nervous that on Thursday, December 15, they shot at American journalists and a TV crew who came to visit them at their Khalde base. An employee of the WITN network was wounded, and the Lebanese taxi driver who accompanied the group is in agony at the American Hospital in Beirut.

As for the French, President Francois Mitterand's ambassador to the Lebanese capital met Amal leader Nabih Berri, December 18, imploring him to order the Shi'ite militias to the stop attacks on his forces' patrols which through the past week have cost Paris' multinational forces contingent two dead and four wounded.

The US Marines presently deployed in Beirut — the same ones who two months ago embarked in Grenada, achieving the unprecedented and glorious victory of the first world power over 43 Cuban construction workers and two dozen Grenadian militiamen — say explicitly that in Beirut they are dead scared. "One must be out of one's mind *not* to be frightened in this place," they murmur in their multi-walled, sandbag-protected trenches. Dug at a distance of about 100 metres from each other, these trenches, forming the advanced defence line of the airport site, remain fully exposed to the artillery of the Progressive Socialist Party positions in the hills above them and to the light and automatic weapons fire of Amal's positions, which extend in a security belt around the southern suburbs of Beirut.

Thus, for the US Marines, being in Beirut is a nightmare which remains unexplained. In fact, they have not the least idea why they were sent there, why they are being shot at or who the "enemy" at whom they shoot may be. To questions by journalists, their junior officers reply with the classical formula of the "good guys" and the "bad guys," adding that they are probably shot at "because we are Christians." One wonders what irreversible confusion would overwhelm their brainwashed minds if they knew that, for example, many Lebanese Communists are Christian. They already get confused enough and are capable of answering only with a silent shrug of the shoulders such questions as why the equally, or perhaps more, Christian Italian troops have not been shot at by the "bad Muslim guys"...

More senior officers are no less stereotyped and far from local realities. To a question by a European correspondent, a US major tried to explain away the American military presence in Beirut with an incredible statement about the 'enemy' who "wants access to the Mediterranean, and we are here to prevent them from getting it." Another Marines officer volunteered the opinion — or official explanation? — that "We are here to defend human rights." Whose human rights? "Those of the Lebanese." The ones at whose shadows they are shooting, across the sandbags and the concrete blocks, are not Lebanese? Of course; they are just the "bad guys."

The Lebanese, all the Lebanese, keep away from the US base, especially since the October 23 bombing. Increasingly, they also try to keep away from French checkpoints, patrols or command posts, by now considered equally dangerous, because they can be attacked at any moment. In regard to the latter, Beirutis have an additional motive for resentment. West Beirut was never exactly a paradise as far as traffic conveniences went, but since October 23, when the French contingent began to dig roadblocks at every crossroads and "control the security" in the city, moving around has become even more difficult. The once glorified former colonisers are now considered by the local population, of whatever social group, as nothing other than "the trouble-makers."

The French military, on the other hand, are highly conscious of the hostility surrounding them, and more than a few of them "remember Algeria." As the mood among the men becomes more and more that "it would be better if we left now, before we are chased away shamefully," the French command intensifies plans to concentrate the contingent along the coast, as much as possible, under the protection of the national flag overflying the guns of the fleet anchored offshore. A drastic reduction of the presence of the contingent in town is also contemplated, according to some sources.

Undoubtedly the nervousness of the US and French Marines — namely of the two contingents of the MNF who have intervened and continue to intervene in the Lebanese war through direct military and police actions as well as with arms, training and advisors to the Lebanese Army, — will grow in the coming weeks, especially as the "restructuring" — code word for "withdrawal" of the Italian contingent — will begin to become visible.

## THIS WEEK'S CENSORSHIP

**Following is a breakdown of censorship cuts for issue 190, December 13, 1983:**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Number of original articles submitted to censors** | **42** |
| **Number of articles totally censored out** | **17** |
| **Number of articles mutilated beyond use** | **3** |
| **Number of articles partially censored but used** | **6** |
| **Number of articles passed** | **16** |

# Damascus Agreement Preludes New Round of Fighting

by Livia Rokach

Despite the signature in Damascus, on Friday, December 16, of a renewed commitment by the Lebanese parties for a "total and effective" cease-fire, which it was believed could hold over into next year, the military escalation continued and intensified through the past days, mainly due to the stepped up coordinated attacks on the liberated areas and resistance positions in them by the US Navy and Israeli Air Force. The Lebanese Army also attempted to erode resistance positions in south Beirut's Shi'ite neighbourhoods. At the same time, on the political and diplomatic levels, the dangerous attempt to bypass the national resistance through US- and Saudi-sponsored direct negotiations between Syria and the Gemayel regime failed when the meeting between the Lebanese, Syrian and Saudi foreign ministers on Sunday in Damascus concluded with no concrete results, chiefly due to American and Israeli refusals to abrogate or revise the May 17 accord. Gemayel's theatrical gesture of flying to Tripoli for talks with Libya's unpredictable leader, Mu'ammar Qadafi, was considered by observers in Beirut to have been another act deprived of all consequence, in addition to that thought up by Gemayel of "frightening" the Reagan administration into pressing Israel to accept some revision of the May accord in order to facilitate negotiations between Damascus and Beirut.

Finally, rumours that the second round of the Geneva "reconciliation talks" could be opened before Christmas have died down, leaving behind only vague speculations about the possibility to resume such talks in a month or so in some other Swiss locality, perhaps Montreux.

An intense bombing of the Druze mountain areas on the morning of December 19 by Israeli Kfir jets resulted in heavy damage to a hospital of the Lebanese Popular Aid Organisation, in Bhamdoun. The air raid caried out in two waves, at 7:50 and 8:08 am, also hit the villages of Ain Saha, Faluga, Mansuriyeh, Baslin and Baalshmey, in addition to an air defence radar station. On December 14, 15, 16 and 18, the massive US Navy force stationed off Beirut bombed the villages of Tarshish, Dahr al-Baidar and four Syrian and national resistance positions along the Beirut-Damascus road. The nuclear-powered USS New Jersey shelled the mountain areas with its 410 mm canons, using 1.2 ton shells, and its 200 mm artillery pieces, while the guided-missile cruiser USS Ticonderoga and the destroyer USS Tantall shelled the same areas with dozens of five-inch shells. Figures on civilian or military casualties or on the damage caused by the multiple shelling and by the air raids were not released by either the Syrian command or the Lebanese resistance.

Western observers in the Lebanese capital attribute no credibility to either US claims that their naval shelling constitutes a measure of retaliation after defensive ground-to-air missiles were launched at American Tomcat reconnaissance missions or to Israeli claims of reprisal raids in return for resistance attacks on the occupation forces in South Lebanon. These claims are seen as pretexts to cover the fact that a real offensive is underway by the foreign forces of the US and Israel, with a view to preparing the ground for an invasion of the resistance-controlled areas by the Lebanese Army, at the same time forcing Syria to be militarily and politically on the defensive.

Meanwhile, in south Beirut, on Saturday, December 17, the Lebanese Army attempted an offensive on Shi'ite strongholds, deploying hundreds of tanks along the line running from Shatila to Kaskas at less than 150 metres from Italian MNF positions around Shatila camp and opening fire at Amal positions from the tank guns. The militias in the attacked area responded with mortar fire, damaging two tanks and causing a dozen casualties to the army, at which point, about 40 minutes after the beginning of the attack, Gemayel's army saw itself forced to retreat. This example illustrates why most military experts in Beirut consider that unless a major escalation of Israeli military intervention is once more undertaken, the plans for a similar invasion are nothing but a pious illusion.

*continued from page 1*

## S. Lebanon

two soldiers in the car were wounded and were evacuated by helicopter to Rambam Hospital in Haifa.

Earlier in the week, Israeli newspapers reported that a hand grenade was hurled at an Israeli military vehicle in Sidon. The spokesperson claimed that there were no casualties.

*The Jerusalem Post* reported, December 21, three military attacks in Sidon on the previous day. The paper did not give any details.

On December 21, a National Resistance Unit clashed with an Israeli patrol near the villages of Dwair and Sharqiyeh, 30 kilometres south of Sidon. According to Lebanese reports, the clash lasted 15 minutes until Israel sent in troop reinforcements. The Israelis erected checkposts on the roads linking the villages in the area and detained at least seven people.

Israeli military experts note that alongside the sharp rise in the number of military attacks, the style of the attacks reveals a growing vulnerability of the Israeli troops. Israel Radio quoted military sources as saying that since al-Ansar prisoners were released nearly one month ago, there has been at least one military attack every day.

# UNRWA Slams Camp 'Rehabilitation' Plans

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) issued a statement, December 15, disavowing any connection with the Israeli government's recently announced resettlement scheme. The press release was welcomed by refugee activists, who feared that the scheme was being prepared with the acquiescence of the UN agency.

The statement, the first official comment from UNRWA following the announcement by Israeli minister without portfolio Mordechai Ben Porat, last month, of a plan to dissolve the West Bank refugee camps, stated that they neither encourage nor discourage Palestinian refugees from taking up the scheme.

"The agency certainly does not oppose measures voluntarily accepted by the refugees which are intended to improve their living conditions. On the other hand, it would strongly object to any attempt to coerce refugees into compliance with any particular scheme," the statement read.

The UN agency also made it clear that no matter where they are living, Palestinian refugees would continue to be eligible for their services. The statement pointed out that in the West Bank, more than 75 percent of the refugee population lives outside the camps and some 25 percent in the Gaza Strip. They continue to receive UNRWA health and education services.

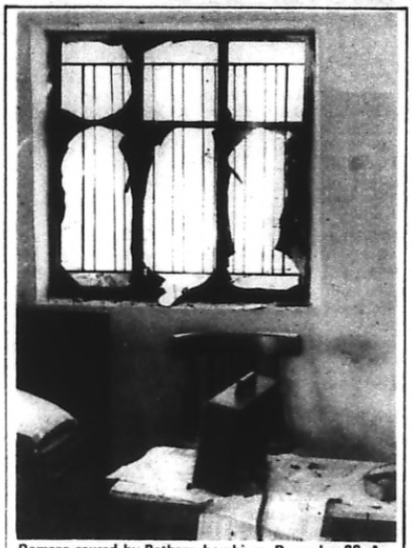
Accordingly, the press communique reaffirmed that even if refugees were to accept the resettlement scheme, they would also continue to receive health and education services. It stated, however, that relocating schools and clinics would require additional funds, which are not available yet.

UNRWA's mandate, which is due to expire in 1984, is expected to be renewed for three additional years.

The UNRWA statement was welcomed by the board of the Dheisheh Youth Centre as a "positive step." A spokesman for the club said that they call on the agency to take a firmer position and declare outright opposition to Ben Porat's scheme. He also called on the agency to exert pressure on governments which plan to finance the project, particularly the United States, not to do so.

He explained that their objections to the scheme arise from fears of the political implications of such a project. "Everybody works for the betterment of his social and economic conditions, so long as it does not contradict their political aspirations." The spokesman explained that the "ongoing repressive measures against Palestinian refugee camps is a clear indication that the authorities are not in any way interested in improving the living conditions of the camps."

The resettlement plan is currently being discussed for final approval by the Israeli government. At the same time, the Israeli coordinator of military government activities in the occupied territories, Binyamin Ben Eleizer, has gone to the US. He is believed to be trying to get funds for the project there.



Damage caused by Bethany bombings, December 20. An Israeli terror group took responsibility for the blasts which injured two.

# Three Cars Arsoned in E. J'lem

Three cars were arsoned on East Jerusalem's Al-Ahktal Street, near the Palestine Museum, December 21. They belong to Tony Salman, Isma'il Abdo and Taysir Sharaf. Local residents charge Israeli terror groups with responsibility for the blazes and say police are not interested in catching the perpetrators.

Marliah Khmashtah, who lives in the neighbourhood, told *Al Fajr* that she woke up at 3:00 am to the sound of an explosion. "When we looked out we saw the three cars on fire," she said.

Khmashtah said that neighbours put out the fires and discovered that three other cars were drenched with kerosine.

Local residents complained that the police did not show up for 45 minutes and after two phone calls were made. The fire service, whose station is near the site of the blaze, did not respond at all, residents say.

The car owners estimate the damage to their cars at about JD1000. Taysir Sharaf, whose Peugeot car was burned, told *Al Fajr*, "the Israeli police are not keen on finding the perpetrators of the fires." Sharaf said that two weeks ago tyres of five cars were slashed. Sharaf discounted the possibility that any personal vendetta was involved in the collective burnings.

One neighbour said the arsonists are the same people who bombed the mosque and church in the Bethany area, December 20.

Fayeq Barakat, head of the Jerusalem Chamber of Commerce, told *Al Fajr* that his office sent a letter to the police December 14, protesting earlier car arsonings in al-Thowri and the discovery of bombs in Jerusalem streets. Barakat said the police did not answer the letter and it was censored out of the local press. The Jerusalem merchant said a delegation plans to visit the head of the Jerusalem police and will determine their next move after that.

Barakat hinted that popular meetings will be called to discuss ways of self-protection including the possibility of setting up round-the-clock guards to protect residential and commercial centres.

Barakat said the Israeli police have failed to respond to calls to increased night patrols.

# Court Wants Reason for Hebron Sealing

Salah Saleem Ju'beh, from Hebron, obtained an order *nisi* December 11, requiring the Israeli commander of the West Bank area to explain before the court the reasons for sealing his home. The collective punishment measure followed the detention of his son, Salah, on a number of military charges.

Since the house was sealed last September, the nine-member family has been living with some relatives.

In her petition for the order *nisi*, Jerusalem lawyer Felicia Langer said that by sealing off the family house, the military punished the entire family for an act allegedly carried out by one member. The order *nisi* requires the West Bank military commander to prove and justify the measure.

The home sealing was carried out early this month by a large Israeli force which surrounded the house in the Hawuz neighbourhood of Hebron, ordering the family to remove their belongings or lose them. The family took about three hours to evacuate the building, after which the soldiers sealed off the entrance with cement blocks. The family moved some of their furniture to their neighbour's house. The punishment came three months after Salah Ju'beh, the oldest son in the family, was arrested. The 23-year-old man was charged with grenade attacks on Israeli military outposts and settlers' houses in Hebron. The charge sheet lists three attacks, one on the confiscated Usama Ibn Munqeth School, on June 16, and another attack on a military patrol in the town, last July 1, which did not cause any damage. The charge sheet also stated that Ju'beh attacked the Dabboyya building with grenades.

# New Student Councils for BZU, Islamic U

The Student Youth Movement won all nine seats in the Bir Zeit University students council elections, December 20.

Bir Zeit University's new students union president, Samir Sbihat, polled 850 votes, a majority of 288 over second place Ghassan Jirar, the candidate for the Progressive Student's Bloc. Ziad Shadid, the Islamic Bloc's presidential candidate, polled 515 votes.

Dr Ghassan Firmand, the dean of students, said, in announcing the results, late December 20, that the elections were held in a democratic atmosphere. Eighty-six percent of Bir Zeit's 2240-strong student body voted.

A poll for the Gaza Islamic University students council was held the same day. Yahya Sinoar was elected president, with 868 votes. Yihyah Musa, vice-president, polled 883; Khaled Hinidi is the new secretary and Mahmoud Habash, with 860 votes, is treasurer. There were no blocs in the poll, and 1273 out of the 1714 students voted.

Last year, students were arrested for membership in an illegal organisation when they formed an election list for the Islamic University elections.

# Family Wants Renunion in Algiers

Zakiya Shamout's five children, from left: Nadia, A'mer, Dawlat, Masu'd and Hala.

NAZARETH — The lawyer for Zakia Shamout, Palestinian prisoner freed in the PLO-Israel November 25 prisoner exchange, says she is asking to be reunited with her five children in Algiers or in any other place. Shamout's lawyer, Nazareth attorney Walid Fahoum, asked the International Committee of the Red Cross, December 16, to intervene on behalf of the dispersed family.

"The Shamout children have lived with their grandmother since their father, Mahmoud, and mother, Zakia, were arrested 12 years ago.

"The Shamout's oldest son, Masu'd, works in Afula and lives with his grandmother in the village of Saloum; two other children are enrolled in a local boarding school and the others live with relatives in Nazareth." (Translation: Al Ittihad, December 18, 1983).

# Bethlehem Predicts Glum Christmas

Christmas will be observed in a less than festive atmosphere in the West Bank town of Bethlehem as the birthplace of Chri[illegible] goes into the 17th year under Israeli occupation.

Bethlehem shopkeepers expect the number of tourists this year to drop by 50 percent because of cancellations of group trips due to the recent bombing of Christian institutions. A number of olive wood and mother-of-pearl workshops have closed this year due to the plummeting sales.

Bethlehem residents complained that the Israeli arrangements for the holiday period exceed any 'security' they point out that for local residents to drive their cars to their own homes during the holidays they need a permit from the military. Residents have preferred to walk.

The annual parade of the Catholic Patriarch from Jerusalem to Bethlehem will begin at 12:30 pm, Christmas Eve, from Jaffa Gate. The parade will reach Nativity Square about 1:30 am, where it will be welcomed by Bethlehem Mayor Elias Freij, Israeli military officials and local lea[illegible]

# Military Evict Israeli Volunteers from Dheisheh

Israeli military authorities declared Dheisheh refugee camp a closed military area, December 17, in order to stop a team of voluntary workers from the Israeli Committee for Solidarity with Bir Zeit University paving a road as a solidarity gesture. Two Israelis and a TV crew were detained.

More than 40 Israeli activists and a similar number of Palestinians from the Dheisheh Youth Centre began work at around 8:00 am paving Shatila Street, an internal camp road. The work was disrupted some three hours after it had begun by Israeli soldiers, who tried to force the volunteers to leave.

Camp residents said four military jeeps loaded with soldiers arrived in the camp shortly after 11:30 and erected checkposts on all roads leading into it. The soldiers ordered the group to leave the camp, as many journalists stood around watching.

Initially, the group refused to obey the order, camp sources said, and began to chant anti-occupation slogans. The group, however, decided to leave after the soldiers threatened to use force to evict them.

CSBZU spokesman Gideon Spiro told *Al Fajr* the order declaring Dheisheh a closed military area was signed by Lieutenant Colonel Turjeman, commander of the southern part of the West Bank, who was waiting outside the camp. The committee workers managed to persuade junior officers to allow them a period of grace in which a political gathering was held. CSBZU members expressed their support for the Palestinian struggle for self-determination and their right to oppose the occupation and stated their goal of a two-state solution.

Dheisheh residents made speeches thanking the committee and said the existance of such a group in Israel is an "inspiration," according to Spiro.

The 40 Israelis left the camp, taking the soldiers with them, but further discussion ensued when they met Turjeman outside. The commander refused to discuss what Spiro called his "stupid order," saying it was a "law and laws must be obeyed."

"When two committee members pointed out to him that 'Germans once had laws too,' he arrested them for refusing to leave a closed military area," said Spiro. A *VIS News* TV crew which arrived during the discussion was also detained. All four were released several hours later on IS10,000 bail.

Spiro called the attempt at a joint work camp a "new method of political demonstration" never before tried. He said the picture presented to the soldiers was surreal. "It was a unique picture of Jews doing construction work, alongside and under the management of Palestinians," he said. "Many people in Dheisheh couldn't believe their eyes. It was in complete contradiction to the picture of Israelis they know — those who arrest, curfew and shoot."

Spiro said the CSBZU will carry on this type of work in Dheisheh and other places. He said the Israeli authorities "could not cope with Israeli and Palestinians who work constructively together. Their policy is based on 'eternal hate' and the picture that it is possible for Palestinians and Israelis proving coexistance is possible is disturbing to them."

## Galilean Wants Orphaned Grandson Returned

Jamileh Darwish, a Palestinian woman from Acre, has appealed to the International Committee of the Red Cross to help locate her grandson, Shafiq, 3, whom she believes is in Ain al-Hilweh camp in Lebanon. Shafiq's father, a PLO fighter, was killed during Israel's invasion of Lebanon last year, and Jamileh wants to bring the young orphan to live with her. His mother is completely paralysed.

Darwish's lawyer, Walid Fahoum, told *Al Fajr* that he was contacted by the ICRC and told that they were unable to locate the child or his mother.

Jamileh Darwish, however, insists that according to reliable information she received from visitors, her daughter-in-law, Hana' Jumbakly, and her grandson are still living in Ain al-Hilweh refugee camp, outside Sidon. She refuses to believe stories that the boy and his mother are in Syria, with Hana's mother. "I had somebody contact her mother and she confirmed that she was still in Lebanon," she said.

The grandmother believes that there is some kind of a puzzle to the alleged disappearance of the child and his mother. She recalled that a few months after Shafiq's mother agreed to forfeit custody of the child at the Muslim religious court in Sidon, she changed her mind and asked to keep him. Shafiq lived with his grandmother after the decision, but the boy was returned after a decision in an Israeli court.

Jamileh said that her stepdaughter was pressured to change her mind. A few days after the boy was returned to his mother, Jamileh learned she was thrown out of her house, in the Sidon area, by the Phalangist forces and later became completely paralysed.

Jamileh has sent two letters to Israel's president asking him to intervene in order to allow her grandson to stay with her. She received no answer.

# Police Arrest DIC Activist

Israeli police summoned Jamal Mu'adi, head of the Druze Initiative Committee, for questioning, December 10, about a solidarity meeting for the Lebanese National Movement held in the village of Yarka over four months ago.

The police tried to charge Mu'adi with holding a gathering in a public place without a permit. He denied the charge and insisted that the meeting was held at his home. He also told the police that the meeting was not a secret one and that several newspapers had written about it.

Mu'adi expressed surprise at the police decision to investigate the meeting four months after it took place. He suggested that the authorities are trying to harass political activists who oppose the war in Lebanon and mandatory military service in the Israeli army for Palestinian Druze residents.

The Druze Initiative Committee, which was established in the early 70's, aims at reviving the Palestinian identity of Druze residents.

# Homeless Gaza Refugees Appeal for Shelter

Thirty-two families from Beach Camp in the Gaza Strip appealed December 17 to humanitarian organisations to assist refugees whose homes were demolished by Israeli authorities in May and June, 1982. The families, comprising 150 people, will be spending their second winter without proper shelter. The houses were demolished as "illegal structures," according to the Israeli authorities who claimed that the houses were located outside refugee camp boundaries.

The short appeal reads:

"We, residents of Beach Camp in Gaza Strip, send out a call for help to all those individuals who have alive a conscience and to all concerned institutions to offer help to us. After our houses were demolished, we still sleep out in the open and suffer now from chilling coldness. We appeal to all concerned to help us improve our situation."

Thomas McAndrews, assistant director of UNRWA, told *Al Fajr* that the families, who live at the site of what remains of their houses, need to find other housing. He said that only the Israeli authorities can allocate land, or offer the refugees the necessary accommodations. McAndrews admitted that the families are living in very poor conditions but that while their problem is "extremely difficult," UNRWA does not own surplus accommodations or alternative houses for them, he noted. McAndrews added that UNRWA was against demolitions whatever the circumstances and that the authorities should not demolish houses without providing adequate alternative shelters.

A Gaza activist from the Beach Camp told *Al Fajr* that the problems of the homeless multiply with the wet and cold of approaching winter.

Ed Walsh, reporter for the *Washington Post* wrote in August 1982 about the demolitions.

"Israel's long-term goal is to do away with the camps, just as immediately after last summer's invasion of Lebanon, Israeli officials said they hoped to see the elimination of the Palestinian refugee camps in southern Lebanon. Many Palestinians, viewing the camps as ugly remainders of what they consider the injustice that was done to them in 1948 — when the state of Israel was created using much of the land inhabited by Arabs — resist the idea of being absorbed into Israeli government housing centres."

Israeli authorities started recently to impose a plan for resettlement at the West Bank's refugee camps. This resettlement plan, issued by Mordechai Ben Porat, minister without portfolio, was unanimously rejected by Palestinian refugees.

# Military Unfreeze Islamic U. Wages

Israeli authorities unfroze US$200,000 of funds belonging to the Islamic University of Gaza, December 14, after a meeting between the university treasurer and military authorities. The money is part of US$1,000,000 in university funds taken by Israel one year ago and held in Bank Leumi. The university has been in financial crisis since the 1982 academic year because of the Israeli move.

As a result of the freeze, the university was unable to pay salaries or cover daily expenses for the past three months. Only half of the money has so far been released. "This situation is illegal and inhuman," Saqer commented. He called it "uncivilised blackmail."

The US$200,000 was released following a meeting between university financial secretary Ahmad Hassan Shawa and Israeli officials. They reportedly promised the university would soon be given permission to withdraw US$450,000 of its money.

Gaza University is not recognised as an independent university by the Israelis who treat it as a religious institution. The Israelis control the university's cash flow, releasing it every three months.

Saqer said this has been the policy since the university opened five years ago. "We want to abolish this agreement and strengthen the independence of the university," he said.

# UN Slams Israel for Prisoner Fraud

NEW YORK — By a majority of 107 votes (including those of the 10 European Economic Community states), with only Israel and the US voting against, the United Nations condemned, December 17, the Israeli government for not releasing Ziad Abu Ain in violation of the prisoner exchange agreement between the PLO and Israel which was sponsored by the International Committee of the Red Cross.

"According to the PLO representative at the UN, Zuhdi Tarazi, the United Nations Organisation demanded that Abu Ain be released and be transferred to Algiers by the Red Cross.

"Tarazi said that the UN decision noted that the Israeli authorities took Ziad Abu Ain from the airport on November 25 back to prison without the knowledge of the Red Cross. Tarazi asked Jerusalem lawyer Felicia Langer to inform Abu Ain that the PLO would do all it can to obtain his release." (Translation: Al Ittihad, December 18, 1983).

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# A Call for Unity

**Four thousand Palestinian fighters, headed by PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat, besieged for the last few weeks in Tripoli, north Lebanon, sailed from the port city, December 20, on board Greek ships flying UN flags and guarded by French war ships. The process ended an episode of Palestinian bloodshed in the wrong time and place, but it surely did not end the Palestinian people's struggle for its basic inalienable rights.**

**Although the latest pan-Arab fighting in Lebanon aimed at undermining what the Arab regimes lost through their 1967 defeat – tight control over the fate of the Palestinian people – Palestinian will was not defeated.**

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# OPINION

AL FAJR invites our readers to contribute letters, articles and opinions. Contributions must be signed, but names may be withheld upon request.

## Gone the Myth of the Israeli 'Superman'

by Yehoshua Sobol

As usual — Raful (ex-chief of staff Raphael Eitan) is right: the (returned) POW's should be put on trial. Not because they didn't shoot and not because they didn't fight. They must be brought to trial because they destroyed one of our myths. Not the myth of the Israeli 'superman'. There is no need to pay any heed to this legend. We will reconstruct it, don't worry, in the next war against Syria, which will be called, by the way, "The Peace for the Legend War," that will liberate us from the trauma of the Peace for Galilee War, that liberated us from the trauma of the October 1973 Yom Kippur War.

No, friends, the POW's have broken a much more important myth for us, a myth that is a cornerstone of our existence. They destroyed the myth of the savage and barbaric PLO, the descendants of the Nazis. They destroyed the legend that a Jew who falls into the hands of the PLO has one fate: to be murdered.

Maybe we can give up bank shares and get along without "correct economics" and even without free education, but how shall we continue to exist without the firm conviction that beyond the barricade there is a bestial enemy, a two-legged cockroach, thirsty for blood? How will we be able to continue to live here and do what we are doing if we have to get used to the thought that standing against us is an enemy who knows how to respect the Geneva Conventions, an enemy that has shown a humane attitude to our soldiers who fall into their hands? On what can we base the reasons of our existence if we'll have to confess that it is possible to negotiate with this enemy and to reach agreements with it that it will respect?

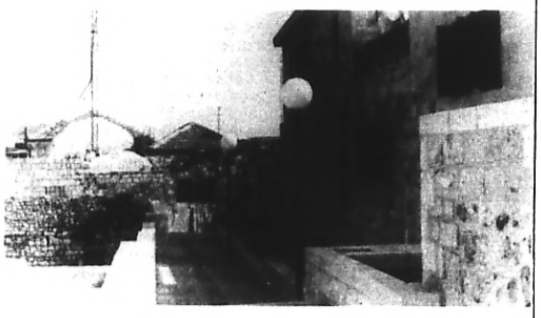
Therefore, the POW's should be brought to court and they should be accused of the following:

1. Not receiving blows from the guards;
2. Not losing teeth and/or nails during the interrogations that didn't take place.

(Translation: Al Hamishmar, December 9, 1983).

## Mine is Mine and Yours is Mine

by Shulamith Aloni



**Bab al-Silsileh section of the Muslim Quarter, confiscated, "established, restored and renovated" to become part of the Jewish Quarter. "A medal of distinction for turning the peaceful life of inhabitants into a hell just because these inhabitants are Arabs?"**

In order to establish, restore and renovate the Jewish Quarter in Jerusalem, all Arab inhabitants were expelled from the area, to the very last one. No begging, demonstrations or press conferences helped. The attempt of Mohammed Burqan to buy a flat in the quarter for the full price, as someone who had had property in the area, failed. The High Court stated that this man had no right to purchase a flat in the Jewish quarter, even if he had had property there, and that this was not discrimination because a distinction on religious grounds is acceptable and that in old Jerusalem people live in fixed quarters according to religious distinction.

This argument was in the minds of the Jewish quarter's directors and also of Justice Minister Nissim, who refused to allow a couple of visitors from Scandinavia who came to study the Bible for a year at Hebrew University to rent a flat from a family in the quarter who went abroad for sabbatical. In reply to a parliamentary question on November 24, 1981, minister Nissim repeatedly and enthusiastically emphasised that keeping the quarter clean of Arabs and Christians is totally in order, and fits the criteria of a democratic society.

I don't accept this statement, and according to my best judgement it is in contradiction to the International Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

It should be remembered that although Israel has not ratified the International Convention for Human Rights under the pressure of the circumstances, the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, the late Moshe Dayan, took care that Israel would ratify the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Racism. It indeed ratified the Convention in February 1979.

The definition of racial discrimination in the Convention states in Article 1, Paragraph 1: "In this Convention, the term racial discrimination means every distinction, exclusion, limitation or preference that is based on reasons of race, colour, family geneology, national or ethnic origin, that is aimed or results in the elimination of the recognition, enjoyment and use or might infringe the recognition, enjoyment or use on an equal basis of human rights and basic freedoms in political, economic, social and cultural life or in any other field of public life."

In light of this definition, everyone can judge and consider the decisions made relating to the Jewish Quarter. For the sake of our discussion about what exactly is taking place in the Muslim Quarter, let's presume that the justice minister and the directors of the Jewish Quarter were right in the total purification of the quarter of all foreigners who aren't Jewish. However, when there is fixed a regional distinction on religious background, doesn't this bind them to have the same rules for the Muslim Quarter, the Armenian, etc.?

Here we witness a brutal invasion by the Birkat Avraham (Abraham's Blessing) *yeshiva* to the Muslim Quarter. A gang of criminals who returned to Judaism, who for the sake of widening the presence and the ownership in that quarter assaulted an old woman, put a baby girl in a sewage pit, hit and abused citizens, destroyed the property of Arabs and according to all opinions "cause indescribable suffering to their Arab neighbours," attack the elderly, women and children, destroy buildings and spread filth in the area. In the past, when complaints were submitted, complaints against the hooliganism of these invaders, the police responded that they are not responsible because they have "ideological motives." The Nazis who committed the *kristallnacht* had motives as well; the murderers in the bloody bus on the coastal road had ideological motives. Does this mean that the ideological motives of Jewish hooligans and criminals who act against the Arab population have top priority? Do they deserve a medal of distinction from the police for turning the peaceful life of inhabitants into a hell just because these inhabitants are Arabs?

Doesn't the precedence of a 'pure' Jewish Quarter, free of foreigners, force the state authorities — and first and foremost the justice minister — to act to rid the Muslim Quarter of invaders? Or is the directive of the regime in Israel, in respect to human and communal rights, that, 'what is mine is mine and what is yours is mine"? And we, the rulers of the country and the chosen people, we are permitted to confiscate, to expel, abuse and assault our fellows and the source of this license is in our being Jewish?

Is it that chauvinism, greed, violence and the lack of justice emanates from our being Jews? And is all this not a form of discrimination but "distinction," as the justice minister said? Distinction on religious grounds and a different morality also relates to the actions and rights of an Arab. An Arab, so we learn, doesn't have the right to his property, life and body to be defended. Look at what happens in the Muslim quarter, and not only there. (Translation: Yediot Aharanot, December 11, 1983).

*Shulamith Aloni is a member of the Israeli Knesset.*

## How Long Must We Wait?

by Ghassan Bishara
Our Washington DC Correspondent

Expelled Mayor of Hebron Fahd Qawasmeh spoke at Washington DC's National Press Club, this week, arguing his case and that of his colleague Mohammed Milhem, of Hebron, and, in fact, that of every Palestinian. "If it took three full years and the involvement of many heads of state, the UN Secretary General and others... yet all have failed to allow me and Milhem back home, what then would it take to solve the Palestinian problem?" he asked.

Mayor Qawasmeh, who now resides in Amman, Jordan, was elected as mayor of Hebron in 1976 and expelled from the West Bank along with Milhem and Hebron *Qadi* Sheikh Rajab Tamimi in revenge for a guerrilla operation in 1980. Since their expulsion they have engaged in a fruitless struggle to return to their own respective cities on the West Bank, he said. Qawasmeh discussed in brief conditions on the West Bank, which he described as "very harsh." Israel's policy, he said, aims at "pushing Palestinians out of the West Bank altogether."

Mayor Qawasmeh said the fighting in north Lebanon is a "sad chapter in Palestinian history." He called for all fighting to cease immediately and for dialogue to start to solve the differences in the PLO, which he called "normal and healthy." Qawasmeh accused both Libya and Syria of trying to divide the PLO, predicting that no party would succeed in doing so.

Land grabbing has many guises. Settlers are now moving into Nablus under the cover of "security" and "religion." Daoud Kuttab of *Al Fajr* visited the city to hear the latest of harassment, violence and corruption behind these glib phrases.

# Is Nablus Next on the Settlers Hit List ?

Palestinian schoolchildren walk past Nebi Yusef Mosque, recently taken over by Israeli settlers./AY photo

Nablus is the West Bank's biggest city, with a population of over 70,000. It seems to be the next Arab city on Israeli settlers' "coexistence list." Until a short while ago, the residential sectors of Nablus had been spared the permanent presence of settlers. This changed last month when settlers took over the Nebi Yusef Mosque and leaders of the West Bank's settlements declared the city their next target.

### From the Beginning

Although the centre of Nablus was not penetrated by settlers for some 14 years following the occupation, the outskirts of Nablus have not been so fortunate (see box).

Nablus residents were admanently opposed to the settlement of Nablus' outskirts. Nablus Mayor Bassam Shaka'a led a peaceful protest march in 1978 to Elon Moreh settlement, south of Nablus. That effort itself was not enough to stop the construction, but a landmark decision by the Israeli High Court ordered the dismantling of the settlement, as it was built on private Palestinian property.

Paradoxically, the High Court decision paved the way for more settlement as the military legislators, who are also the executors and judges in the West Bank, quickly filled the loophole, using the suggestions made by judges in the Elon Moreh decision as a steppingstone. The decision rejected the settlement as a 'national security' necessity but pointed out to grabbers that they could take Arab land without High Court interference by differentiating between private land, 'state land' and *miri* land. *Miri* is an Ottoman category roughly equivalent to common land.

### Settling Nablus Itself

Infamous Israeli settlers like Rabbi Moshe Levinger and Elyakim Haetzim, spokesman for the council of settlements, couldn't use the traditional excuse of "ancient Jewish presence" to enter to the city of Nablus. Unlike Jerusalem and Hebron, Nablus never had one. For thousands of years Nablus has been known as a bastion of the Samaritans. Known as the arch-enemies of the Jews during Biblical times, Samaritans held Mount Jerezim, overlooking Nablus, because of their belief that it was Mount Moriah, where Abraham prepared to sacrifice his only son Isaac. Unable to claim Jewish presence, the settlers focussed their attention on religious places they could lay claim to with a sympathetic military government. They hit on Jacob's Well and Joseph's Tomb.

Settler strategists hit on Jacob's Well as their first target. They did so for both theological-ideological and strategic reasons. Jacob, to religious Jewry, is more important than Joseph. Jacob's Well is also set on 12 dunums of land with a few buildings, much bigger than the two-dunum Joseph's Tomb site. The settler-strategists also believed it would be easier to make some kind of deal with the owners of Jacob's Well — the Greek Orthodox Church — rather than with the Islamic *waqf*, which owns Joseph's Tomb.

Negotiations between settlers and the Greek Orthodox Church began in the late 1970s. It was rumoured that the Israeli religious establishment, which has had good contacts with church people in Jerusalem, was on the verge of making a deal to purchase the well site and its surroundings. The problem facing the Greek Orthodox Church, sources said, was the intransigence of Father Philmnos Khasapes, the resident priest in Jacob's Well. This was taken care of, as far as the settlers were concerned, when, on November 29, 1979, a settler threw a grenade which killed him. Later, in an Israel court, the settler, Bar Israel, described as a mentally disturbed individual acting alone, admitted to the killing, giving as his reason that Jacob's Well should be for the Jews. He was convicted of the murder.

But the demise of Father Khasapes turned out not to be enough. The Jacob's Well Monastery was turned over to another Greek Orthodox Priest, Father Yostanious, who also opposed selling the site.

Father Yostanious explained to *Al Fajr* the importance of the Jacob's Well Church. "This church and its surroundings have been property of the Orthodox Church since the fourth century," he said. "Theologically speaking, they have great importance to the Christian faith because it was here that Jesus Christ revealed himself for the first time to a Samaritan woman at the well."

Speaking of the demise of his predecessor, he said he is not worried. He says that he will not hesitate to use his licensed pistol if any settler attempts to move onto church property.

### Joseph's Tomb

Not succeeding in gaining possession of the Christian controlled Jacob's Well, the settlers turned their eyes to the Muslim-controlled Joseph's Tomb. (Joseph was Abraham's great-grandson). The site is in a densely populated neighbourhood east of the Ramallah-Nablus road near the entrance of the city. It is surrounded by three schools with a total student capacity of over 2000. The site itself is only nine metres square. It contains the tomb of Joseph, a room for the site's guard and a small 10-by-four-metre mosque. A small garden and a backyard are surrounded by a tall three-metre wall that separates the tomb from the Mazuz al-Masri schoolyard.

The Joseph's Tomb Mosque is a domed building in the classic Turkish style. According to the guard of over 50 years, Mohammed Fiad, 71, the building has been destroyed about five times. Shortly after 1967, the Israeli ministry of religion moved in, placed a sign in Hebrew, Arabic and English and carried out some superficial renovations, he said. The small room that contains the tomb has a plaque written in three languages quoting the Bible to the effect that the bones of Joseph were transferred to this site in Nablus. The tomb itself has a dark blue cover with Hebrew writing on it.

According to the elderly guard, the site is visited by adherents of all three monotheistic religions. "Before 1948, under British and Turkish rule, Jews would come to pray at the site and leave," said Fiad.

After 1967 the situation continued about the same as it was during Turkish and British rule. "But in the past two years things have changed," said Fiad. Settlers from newly established settlements are making more and longer visits. Visiting settlers also started carrying out religious rituals at the site. Neighbours complain that settlers started to come and carry out circumcisions, *Bar Mitzvas* and weddings. One neighbour complained that the late-night ceremonies broadcasted over loudspeakers and dancing keeps them awake.

The frequent and provocative visits of the settlers reduced the number of Muslim believers coming to pray at the mosque to nil. Finally, with no one coming to pray, guard Mohammed Fiad moved his living quarters from the tiny room adjacent the building into the mosque itself. The guard's move paved the way for settler action. In the summer of 1982, visiting settlers took over the tiny guardroom, breaking in and changing the lock.

The Islamic *waqf* authorities, who discovered the takeover weeks later, stopped paying Fiad for not informing them. Hassan Odeh, head of Nablus' *waqf* branch, not known for their speedy action, told *Al Fajr* that no one has been appointed to take over the post yet, despite the fact that he recommended a number of appropriate candidates for the job.

Mohammed Fiad, who has stayed on the job which his family has held for generations, is able to continue because he has always received a payroll salary from the Israeli ministry of religious affairs. Neverthless, Fiad says he could feel from the mood of the visiting settlers that something bad was going to happen. One day in November he went to the *waqf* office, gave them the key to the mosque and warned them that settlers were planning to take over the site.

Sure enough, on November 10, 1982, the settlers smashed the mosque's lock and put on one of their own. They told Israeli military officials that they wanted to use the mosque as a religious school, according to the official version of events. As a compromise to the Nablus area military governor, the settlers re-

*continued on page 13*

by Abd al-Rahman Abu Arafah

Contrary to the Labour Party's Allon Plan, which called for building settlements away from populated areas, the Likud Party's settlement programme calls for special efforts to build settlements in Arab-populated sectors. The Likud government works to execute this policy hand-in-hand with the Gush Emunim movement.

Their settlement policy for Nablus consists of a mixture of a number of plans, among them the Sharon Plan (named after ex-Defence Minister Ariel Sharon), the Gush Emunim Plan and the (Jewish Agency settlement supremo Matityahu) Drobless Plan. The basic quidelines for all of them are: dividing the south, central and north West Bank into settlement blocs; connecting settlement in the Jordan Valley with the coastal zone through settlement strips; surrounding Arab cities and reducing their possibility to expand; building Israeli cities with large populations in order to counter the Arab populated cities.

The implications of these plans for Nablus can be seen in the construction of two settlement axes.

The Rihan axis, west of Jenin, consists of four settlements housing 100 families. The main goal of this blow is to stop Arab communities in the northern West Bank from growing towards villages in the Triangle inside the pre-67 borders.

The Sanour axis runs between Nablus and Tulkarm. It has seven settlements, containing 220 families. It separates Nablus from Tulkarm and acts as a buffer between Nablus and the coastal area.

The Nablus-Qalqiliya axis has nine settlements, with a population of 2000 settlers. Israel has announced plans to increase this number to 10,000.

The cross-Samaria axis consists of four settlements connecting the Jordan Valley with the coastal area. This bloc has 1500 settlers, among them 900 at Ariel. Israel plans to boost the population to 5000 in the first stage. The bloc separates the central West Bank from the north.

Israel has plans in hand to bring large numbers of Israelis to city-settlements in order to match the population of cities like Nablus. To this end they have established a settlement-city in the hills around Nablus in order to control the city. The nucleus for this plan was introduced with the establishment of Bracha settlement, last spring, planned to become 'Upper Nablus.' As such, it will play the same role as Upper Nazareth.

The settlement city of Ariel is also part of plans for the Israelisation of the West Bank.

The latest development happened last month with the infiltration to the downtown sectors of Nablus accompanied by claims that there are Jewish holy sites there. This plan will follow closely the method used in Hebron to settle in the heart of the city.

*Abd al-Rahman Abu Arafah is an agricultural expert and author of* Settlement in the Occupied Territories.

Write your own rules and make the evidence fit them seem to be the rule of thumb for US State Department human rights documents *Al Fajr's* **John Richardson** found when reviewing Law in the Service of Man's critique of the Americans' 1982 report. *HaAretz* writers **Yehudit Winkler** and **Zvi Barel** chip in with looks at the manoeuvring of Israeli trade unions and censors to deprive Palestinians of their rights.

# When the US Gets to Monitoring Human Rights...

by John Richardson

*The Reply of Law in the Service of Man to the US Report on Human Rights Practices in the Territories Occupied by Israel*, Timothy Hillier, Law in the Service of Man, Ramallah, 1983.

If human rights were secured by research, then no doubt the people of the occupied territories would be entering a period of unprecedented freedom and security. The past few weeks has seen the publication of three reports on the human rights situation in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip by US, Israeli and international organisations. They join a growing list of other publications dealing with the same subject. In fact, the burgeoning list says more about the human rights business itself and the politics of rights than it will affect the situation on the ground.

Law in the Service of Man is the West Bank affiliate of the International Commission of Jurists. Since it was founded in 1980 it has built for itself an impressive record of publications on the legal situation under occupation. Its first publication, *The West Bank and The Rule of Law*, ruffled legal feathers and led a group of Israeli state-employed jurists to publish a counter-publication. With its latest report, LSM is moving into the same area. 'The Reply' deals exclusively with answering the US State Department's 1982 report on the human rights situation in the occupied territories. This fact alone reveals the problem with human rights documentation: the conclusions of any organisation are governed more by its own political assumptions than by some objective scale of values.

In the introduction, LSM points out that the US administration publishes an annual report on the human rights situation in foreign countries. Congress must approve the report on human rights before these countries are eligible to receive their aid allocations. LSM accuses the State Department of "creating a false impression of the human rights situation in the occupied territories" through "omissions and the general tone" of their report.

The State Department's primary tool, according to LSM, is selective quotation. Palestinians in the Sate Department's eyes make "allegations" and "complaints" — these are seldom substantiated, in US eyes. Thus, LSM points out, the State Department was unable in 1982 to find any "credible evidence of political killings" by the Israeli military. Now LSM remembers, as well as everyone else, that 32 people died at the hands of the military, Israel-armed settlers and Village Leaguers in the course of the year, and says so. The State Department officials charged with putting out their report covered up these deaths by stating that "several deaths resulted from terrorist attacks." It goes on to point out that the Israelis do not condone political killings.

LSM for its part simply quotes two incidents. One is a report from an Israeli paper in which a soldier was given a three-month suspended sentence for killing one person and wounding two children. In an affidavit gathered by their researchers, they report the shooting in cold blood of a Halhoul youth for which the soldier responsible was sentenced to four months imprisonment. This, they say, is enough to cast doubt on the State Department's allegations about Israeli honour.

A similar pattern of Palestinian "allegation" being countered by the State Department's inability to find any evidence follows in sections dealing with torture, disappearances, cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment, and arbitrary arrest or imprisonment. Quoting from the press, its own records and the Geneva Conventions, LSM weighs in with the evidence the State Department chooses to ignore.

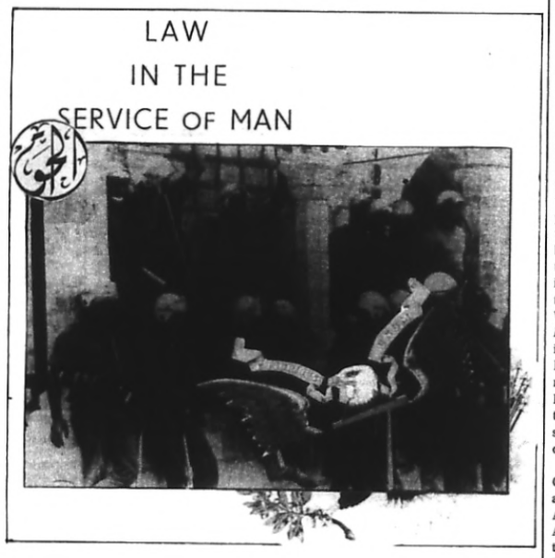
The area of civil and political rights is much more tricky. Torture victims are torture victims, even if one chooses to ignore them. How one judges the abuse of political freedom is much more difficult. The State Department admits abuses do occur, but, LSM says, the overall impression their report gives is that where freedom is abused "restriction only occurs, on stated security grounds, to prevent expression of anti-Israeli or anti-Semitic sentiments." LSM replies by pointing out the by now well-documented censorship of literature, newspapers and textbooks and points to restrictions in education.

LSM hoists the State Department on its own petard in its reply to the territories states: "Strikes *are legal as long as they are not undertaken for political reasons.*"

LSM fills in for the State Department by quoting the cases of restrictions of unions and activists over the year, pointing out some of Israel's military orders governing union activity.

LSM similarly deals with sections on freedom of religion, movement, participation in the political process and the economic, cultural and social situation in the occupied territories.

When a regime like that in the US sets itself up in the human rights monitoring business, the job of critics is as straightforward as shooting fish in a barrel. LSM deals with the situation straightfaced, with little attempt to draw out the political underpinnings of either the State Department's or its own work. Its latest study, however, gives food for thought to people interested in




section on the freedom of peaceful assembly and association. It quotes the same State Department report with respect to trade union rights in Poland and the occupied territories. By the State Department's own criteria, the right to strike in the two places are extremely similar. However, the State Department's report gives an impression that the situation in the occupied territories is much better, LSM says. The State Department Report on Poland reads: "*Although the bill provides a framework for the creation by workers of what are described as independent, self-governing unions, its one unquestioned objective was to delegalise Solidarnosc and prevent a similar movement from ever emerging again. The bill narrowly restricts trade union activities to matters of wages, working conditions, and living conditions. The legislation bars unions from attempting to challenge government policies.*" (*US Report*, p.971). In contrast, the Report on the occupied probing the political underbelly of the rights business.

Like most of its other studies, LSM's latest report is a thorough job. This reviewer found only one error of fact (the bombing of the mayors occurred in 1980), a definite improvement over other studies. The reluctance of the organisation to pass through the 'political' door is unfortunate, however. With the growth in the human rights business, the area cries out for a consciously political analysis of the situation here. Until then, outside observers will pick their favourite organisation — the State Department, the Israeli government, the military authorities, one of the non-government Israeli or international bodies, or LSM — and simply dismiss the others as biased. The State Department has already got this down to a fine art, and until the gloves come off, their files will simply grow fatter with what they call "allegations" and LSM's documented facts.

# Annexing Workers' Money Without Workers' Rights

by Yehudit Winkler

During the planned escalation of the struggle to get an advance on cost of living payments and to eliminate unemployment, *Histadrut* (Israeli Labour Federation) leaders closed their eyes and ears and carried on with the agenda; they did not respond to the announcement of Mordechai Amster, secretary of the Construction Workers Union , that "...Israeli construction workers have a priority right to work in the construction of the country." In a conversation with *HaAretz* to clarify his statement, Amster said his announcement means: in Western Europe *Gast Arbeiten* (guest workers) are dismissed first in time of crisis; it will also be like that in this country.*

This is the first time that Arab workers from the (occupied) territories have been called *Gast Arbeiten* by a *Histadrut* activist. And this is not a simple activist but one who headed a special *Histadrut* committee which recommended equalisation (of Israeli and Palestinian) wages and employment conditions and to assign the *Histadrut* responsibility for this.

The *Histadrut* asked to be given responsibility for workers in (occupied) territories even in the time of (Labour Alignment) rule, shortly after the 1967 war. Golda Meir and Levi Eshkol rejected the repeated approaches mainly for party reasons. They objected because they feared the establishment of ties between workers from the occupied territories and the trade union federation in Israel would be interpreted internationally as part of an annexation plan. When the Likud came to power, the *Histadrut* repeated its claim and activated its contacts in the ILO (International Labour Organisation) to get a resolution-recommendation passed. Gideon Ben Israel, the *Histadrut's* representative to the ILO, returned from last summer's session of the Organisation carrying the desired recommendation.

Ben Israel pointed out both in Geneva (site of the ILO's headquarters) and in talks with former Defence Minister Ariel Sharon and his successor Moshe Arens the serious international implications of the anomaly created in the Israeli labour market, which employs nearly 80,000 workers from the (occupied) territories without appropriate professional protection. In discussions with the defence ministers and in a memorandum sent to former Prime Minister Menachem Begin, the *Histadrut* spokesmen strengthened their arguments by quoting the conclusions of delegations (which investigated the situation) on behalf of the ILO, which included criticism of the gap between conditions of workers from the occupied territories and those of Israeli labourers.

Returning from the session of the Executive Management Committee of the ILO, Gideon Ben Israel published an announcement saying that after the unequivocal recommendation of the ILO that responsibility for the workers from the occupied territories shift from the military government to the *Histadrut*, the last obstacle disappeared. He claims the *Histadrut* postponed submission of a legal claim on the "painful issue" because of national responsibility. To strengthen his arguments he recalled that in 1976, then Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin stated that if it could be shown that there are no grounds to fear the response of the international organisations, responsibility for workers from the occupied territories will be passed on to the *Histadrut*.

The Likud repeatedly rejected the *Histadrut* demand ever since it came to power. The *Histadrut* Executive Committee was surprised. (General Secretary Yoram) Meshel and other senior officials estimated that the Likud would have jumped at the offer for understandable reasons given its platform and its general plan for the territories' future. However, just as the *Histadrut* avoided emphasising in public the prosaic argument that is the basis of its claim — enrichment of the *Histadrut* pension funds — so the government, for the same reason, is not happy to pass to Alignment hands financial resources estimated in billons of shekels. Deductions for social benefits that are collected from employers for occupied territories workers are transferred monthly to the (military government) employment service. The *Histadrut* doesn't totally lose out in this arrangement. "Organisational taxes" are transferred to its safe by the employment service. In return for this, the *Histadrut* is said to provide trade union services to workers from the occupied territories — ie, professional protection in the widest sense of the concept, including protection of their rights for work according to the same regulations that govern Israeli labourers.

Furthermore, the *Histadrut* reasons in its claim that responsibility for occupied territories workers be transferred to its hands and that collective agreements valid in the state of Israel also apply to them. For instance, on May 29, a letter was circulated to secretaries of the workers' councils by Yitzhak Gil'adi, chairperson of the committee for Arab affairs in the occupied territories, stating that in addition to the payments and rights that the territories' labourers deserve from the payments section of the employment service, they should also get equal wages and rights "as obligatory according to the work enterprise agreements." In order to remove any doubt, on June 7, Shlomo Amir, the minister of labour and welfare's advisor for occupied territories workers affairs, in a letter to Yitzhak Gil'adi wrote: "... it is agreed that the *Histadrut* and its affiliates take control of the implementation of the full social and professional rights that (occupied) territories workers deserve for their work in Israel... The *Histadrut* representatives and the government will continue to cooperate in order to ensure that inhabitants of the (occupied) territories who work in Israel will be employed according to labour laws and labour agreements that abide in Israel."

Mordechai Amster doesn't understand the controversy generated by his announcement and says: "The poor of your town come first." However, Amster himself keeps in his own hands information on the actual situation of the Construction Workers Pension Fund, one of the *Histadrut* pension funds that is supposed to merge with bigger funds in the framework of planned reforms. If his claim, made as chairperson of the *Histadrut* committee to care for the (occupied) territories labourers, is to equate occupied territories workers' conditions with those of their Israeli counterparts and give the *Histadrut* money deducted from their wages, perhaps the Construction Workers Pension Fund could be saved. The addition of the (occupied) territories workers would increase the fund by about 50 percent. The person who was enthusiastically preaching this has now made a 180 degree turn and promises his constituency he will guard their primacy over the (occupied) territories workers. The turnabout has another explanation, beyond the failure of the negotiations between the *Histadrut* and the government on this issue: the elections for the Construction Workers Union institutions will take place in April 1984, and only Israeli construction workers have voting rights.

full employment it took upon itself full professional responsibility for workers from the (occupied) territories. Now it acts cynically, disclosing its true intentions: not the professional protection it asked to ensure, not the international political aspects that bothered it in the ILO and other international professional organisations but the tremendous sums deducted for social benefits were what attracted it. Just as when it adopted a pragmatic stand by giving permission to (the *Histadrut*-owned multinational building concern) Solel Boneh and other *Histadrut* companies to build in the

**Palestinian worker on Israeli construction site (left), Indians queue before immigration officials in West Berlin (below). A *Histadrut* official recently equated the status of workers from the occupied territories with that of guest workers in Western Europe. In fact, foreign workers in West Germany are better protected by trade unions than Palestinians by the *Histadrut*.**

There are no grounds to expect the government to agree to effect the ILO recommendations in the foreseeable future. In spite of Gideon Ben Israel's threats, the *Histadrut* has not submitted a legal claim against the government. The subject has been totally removed from the agenda. Now, along with the increasing fears of unemployment, mainly in the sectors where workers from the (occupied) territories outnumber their Israeli colleagues, the *Histadrut* is not happy to unfurl the flag of social justice and political slogans which are directed first and foremost to the international professional organisation of which it is a member.

The question is a test of the credibility of the *Histadrut*. In times of territories, so it acts now with cynical pragmatism *vis a vis* its responsibility for (occupied) territories workers.

In the party dispute between the Likud and the Labour Alignment on the territories' future, the present issue has received tacit consent. This is striking evidence to the assertion that nobody is seriously concerned about coexistence with the population of the (occupied) territories, whatever their geo-political or social perspective is. (Translation: HaAretz, November 24, 1983).

* It is doubtful whether, for instance, in West Germany the foreign workers situation is as Mr Amster tries to describe. In the German trade unions there are special departments for foreign workers, who enjoy full professional protection.

# Casino Censorship

by Zvi Barel

Words like "casino" and "censorship" are not usually accepted together. Censorship is generally connected with serious matters to do with defence or politics. Casinos bear the connotation of rashness, fickle mindedness and even emptiness.

But it appears that censorship is also ready from time to time to amuse itself with gambling, especially when it dictates the winning numbers.

There was an incident several months ago when the censorship did not allow *Al Fajr* newspaper to distribute in the occupied territories. The paper was accused of publishing material without passing it through the censors. A short time later, a similar order was issued against *Al Sha'ab*, which also appears in East Jerusalem. In the face of an administrative order from censorship, a paper can approach only one saviour — the High Court. This is what *Al Fajr* newspaper did.

The High Court is not an Arab newspaper, and therefore it demands explanations for all kinds of administrative steps. The High Court is also ready to deal, to a limited degree, with what are called "security reasons;" it demands to know what they are and is not satisfied with the reasons given to the Arab population.

And here the difficulty arises: the "responsible" elements feared they couldn't give reasons to the High Court for the decision not to give distribution permits to these newspapers. Then what can they do? They started to install the roulette table, and after a discussion centered on the subject they said:

"All those who were present in the discussion, except the censorship officer, agreed that since in the present situation it does not seem that it is possible to win the whole pot in court — namely, to prevent distribution in the occupied territories or to obtain a verdict which would enable the censor to instruct that all a paper's material be subject to their approval — it would be preferrable not to force the issue and withdraw from legal negotiations with *Al Fajr* and agree on subjects (and they are many) on which the newspaper will be obliged to get advance approval from censorship."

The censorship officer, on the other hand, is a professional gambler. His colleagues' fears are not part of his temperament. His rule is 'all or nothing', and in the discussion mentioned above he insists that all material pass through censorship, "and not at the price of losing the case in the High Court."

Opposite him stands another player who represents "the big investor" — this is the adviser of Arab affairs for the coordinator of activities in the occupied West Bank. He says: "My assessment is that we should not come to a confrontation with the universities and the newspapers, a confrontation which would harm the image of Israel. Therefore there must be an appropriate compromise." That is to say: let us play with small sums and in a solid way.

The head of the international law branch (there is something like this) in the chief military prosecutor's command suggests camouflaging the "main financier." He suggests that "the requirements for the conditions of censorship, which must be more strict in contrast to the Israeli newspapers, do not accord with an order from the censor in Israel but as a condition for a distribution permit in the West Bank. This would make it easy for the High Court, which knows that according to international ruling there is no free press in held territories like there is in a democratic state."

Now they start to spin the wheel, as the scale of the first manipulation is suggested by the legal advisor of the occupied territories: "First we reach an arrangement with *Al Sha'ab* in order to be in a good starting position with *Al Fajr*" (and this in fact is what they do) and then, "after giving the permit to *Al Sha'ab*, the representative of the state prosecution comes and tells *Al Fajr* that the governorate is ready to give a distribution permit to *Al Fajr* with the same conditions as those of *Al Sha'ab*, and all the materials which are published in the issues should go to to censorship." Now the bet is connected with *Al Sha'ab's* acceptance of the conditions, and the fate of *Al Fajr* is bound with *Al Sha'ab's* ability to negotiate.

But the gamblers do not take unnecessary risks. Consequently, the assessment of the adviser is that the paper accepts any demand they present as a condition for renewing its distribution permit. Up to now half of the numbers which are registered on the gambling table have been secured.

But what will happen if *Al Fajr* insists on not accepting the conditions of *Al Sha'ab*?

In such a case it is possible to spin the roulette wheel empty for a few turns. "The representative of the prosecution tells the paper that it has to consult it's seniors. It tells this to the chief censor, who approaches the defence minister." Three rounds pass and the paper is not distributed. In the meantime, it loses money and it is put under strong pressure.

And then, "the representative of the state prosecution conducts negotiations with the newspaper regarding the subjects which it has to give to censorship. The criteria for passing the material will not be subjective, such as "material which would incite," but objective, such as defence, (the occupied) areas, the state of Israel, the PLO, the Arab world, Jews... etc." And it is clear that it is not indicated here who determines in an objective way what is "Israel's security" which prevents publication, what are the "Jewish subjects"... etc.

In this round, all required information about the right numbers is in the hands of the gamblers. *Al Sha'ab* and *Al Fajr* newspapers do not know what is being cooked up behind their backs and all they see is a doubtful system of under-the-table arrangements.

The newspapers have no (chance of) success in the game and the gamblers know this because the final roll decides that "any agreement reached with *Al Fajr*, applies to the rest of East Jerusalem's newspapers."

So things go like this. *Al Sha'ab* newspaper, which did not know it could negotiate, agreed on the conditions. From it, the ball rolled to *Al Fajr*. They showed it the conditions of *Al Sha'ab's* (distribution license) and it agreed. Then the same thing is done with the other newspapers. Maybe if the newspapers prefered to follow the case in the court, they would have enjoyed more freedom of action, but the pressures, the time and the money made it difficult.

By the way, in all this long discussion the problem was not examined from a principled point of view. (The whole question was) turned around to become: "How to administer the game in a correct way."

Therefore, when they say that a certain article in an Arab newspaper "was censored for security reasons," one can only say: "Ha. Pimps, again you swept the board?" (Translation: HaAretz, December 8, 1983).

Birkat Avraham Yeshiva students in the Old City of Jerusalem don't mince words. They told **Atallah Najjar**, of *Al Fajr*, that murder and other acts of violence are all part of their "ascetic" approach to evicting Palestinians from their homes. The Israeli Army, police and local government officials are happy to let them get on with it.

# A Faith in Violence

There is something terrible and strange about the violence practised by students of the religious school — Birkat Avraham (The Blessings of Abraham) — against Arabs in the Old City. This is not the kind of blazing street violence we have been familiar with from past years. It is a kind of violence carried out cold-bloodedly and with mental ease. These "(religiously) repentant" students are not only ex-convicts but also ex-pilots and ex-members of kibbutzim who overcame their problems and fell under the protection of Rabbi Avraham Dobek.

Student Assaf, former member of Kibbutz Yad Hannah and graduate of one of Israel's para-military youth movements, says: "We don't care what the press writes. We can state that we murdered Maya Zinger (an Israeli girl whose mutilated body was found near Hadassah Hospital recently)." "It is better to have you write the worst about us," adds Assaf's colleague, Arik, also a graduate of a para-military youth group.

Another student volunteered to explain to us the pragmatic faith of violence adopted by Rabbi Avraham Dobek: "We would like our Arab neighbours to know that we are malicious people. We will stop at nothing. We do not want to live behind barred gates with intercom systems like the students in the other 'religious' schools in Arab Jerusalem."

There is no doubt that this tactic worked. The Arab neighbours live in constant fear. They are aware that the Birkat Avraham students are capable of anything. Last Thursday, Yahya Zaytoun and his son Ne'man learned this and it left its scars on their skin. "I was working at my shop near the school. At 5:00 pm I asked my 12-year-old son to take a tea kettle home. But he said he had seen many students in the street and was afraid to return. My 22-year-old son Ne'man accompanied him to the house. On his way home, Ne'man was surrounded by two groups of students, one from the front and the other from behind; they jumped on him, knocked him to the ground and started beating and kicking him. I ran to help him. But they jumped on me and hit me with iron bars all over my body and over my head.

"The Arab women in the neighbouring houses, upon seeing what was going on, started to throw stones and bottles at the students. The women saved our lives," said the father.

The father and his son were taken to the nearby Hospice Hospital. The father needed 20 stitches on his head and the son 12. When Ne'man was released from hospital, he met some friends on the road near the "religious" school. The crowd did not please the yeshiva students, who attacked Ne'man and his friends. Ne'man ran back to the hospital, where he remained until it was dark before returning home.

Fayez Abu 'Asab was also injured in the attack and was taken to the hospital. On the same day, Nasri Abu Rajab was also attacked. He said: "Dozens of students from the 'religious' school surrounded my barbershop and without any provocation on my part, smashed the window and left."

The Arab residents of al-Wad quarter say they are lucky to have the Hospice Hospital in their quarter. The first victim of the violent acts of the students of this school was Fatimah Abu Mayaleh. On April 4, she was discovered by Nafez Abu Maizer in a pool of blood, with her head split and wounds all over her body. The neighbours say the students assaulted her in order to scare them away from their houses, which the *yeshiva* students want for their school. In fact, two Arab families left in fear. But the complete seizure of the Arab buildings in the vicinity of the school required that the case of Mahmoud Abu Sneineh be "settled." The attack was carefully planned. It was carried out in stages:

Birkat Avraham, located in the Old City: "The Arab neighbours live in constant fear."

On April 20, Abu Sneineh found people had entered his house and destroyed parts of it. Then they littered the entrance and threatened to carry out a new "Sabra and Shatila" massacre against him. On May 10, Abu Sneineh found the kitchen in his house totally destroyed. This time he got the message. Today Abu Sneineh lives in Hebron in a tent given to him by the Red Cross. He left behind in his house all of his worldly possessions: a refrigerator, a sewing machine, a TV set and a bed. Recently the students put a pile of bricks in the house entrance.

Birkat Avraham students are the followers of Rabbi Braslav. They lead an "ascetic" life. They perform "prayers" for long hours in the open and are convinced that God "stands by them." As proof, they cite the case of the contracter who dared demolish the lodging they constructed on the roof of their school. Following this act, the contractor fell off the building and was completely paralyzed. He did not recover until he donated a large quantity of building materials to the school.

The Israeli police's treatment of the students is astonishingly mild. The culprits in the case of Fatimah Abu Mayaleh have never been convicted. Mahmoud Abu Sneineh did not get any police protection. He was forced to leave his house and live in a tent in Hebron.

The attackers of Yahya Zaytoun and his son were detained in al-Qishleh (police station) for only two hours. They were fed a delicious meal from their colleagues and drank beer. After that they were released.

If the police are not going to tame the students of this "religious" school, then the mass media will do the job. A press blockade forced them to retreat into their school. Some of them even tried to give a moderate picture.

At midnight, the students wake up. Some of them go to a mountaintop near Jerusalem to perform "prayers". The remaining ones beat tin cans all night to irritate their Arab neighbours.

It should be conceded that the students of this school speak candidly. They hate and despise their Arab neighbours. One of them said smilingly, "A good Arab is a dead one." When Fatimah Abu Mayaleh was attacked, they said sarcastically, "We did not know that the Arabs had blood." Now they do not chose their words carefully. Said one, "Bring us an Arab so that we may slaughter him in front of the cameras."

They offer a historical justification for their treatment of the Arabs by stating that Jewish families lived in the houses adjoining the school from the sixteenth century until 1936. One of those families rented its house to the Abu Sneineh family. For the students, this is sufficient cause to regain Jewish control over all the Old City. In the end the students said, "We are waiting for World War III. It will benefit the Jews. We can write down that we are crazy and that we came here to receive treatment."

During the past year and a half the students were in the Birkat Avraham School, the police received scores of complaints againt them. In the beginning, the complaints concerned their dispute with the students of a neighbouring school, "Torat Kohanim." Following an agreement between the two schools, complaints started to flow from Arab residents. Despite the fact that more than 10 complaints were lodged with the police by Arabs, only one case was started against five students. They were accused of assaulting Abdallah Abu Ghazalah on March 9, 1983. They will be tried at the Jerusalem District Court soon. Other files were closed under the pretext that the Arab plaintiffs failed to identify their assailants.

Regarding the proposal of Mayor Teddy Kollek to relocate the students, the police chief of the Jerusalem district, Rahamim Comfort, says: "Eviction is not a way of keeping law and order... The law does not empower the police to evict people so as to keep order. This case should be handled by ordinary means. A gun cannot be used against a fly."

On the other hand, General Amnon Shahak, military commander of the central district, turned down a proposal by the West Jerusalem Municipality that the army take charge of the 'religious' school — Birkat Avraham. Director of Israeli broadcasting Lipkin says that the authority to evict lies with the Minister of Defence Moshe Arens.

Teddy Kollek refused to approach Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir in this regard. He claims that Shamir is preoccupied with more important matters. It has been learned that General Arieh Iftsan, the inspector general of the Israeli police, said some time ago, "It is better to have the students of this school in the heart of the Old City rather than in jail."

"We will stop at nothing."

# PALESTINE AND LITERATURE

An ambitious Palestinian Culture Week was organised by the Council for the Advancement of Arab-British Understanding (CAABU) together with the General Union of Palestinian Writers and Journalists, November 28 through December 11, at Friends House in the centre of London. A description of the festive week was sent to *Al Fajr* by **Shirley Eber**, who attended most of the activities. In the insert are opinions and evaluations by local participants who on their return from London spoke to *Al Fajr's* **Said al-Ghazali.** Two West Bankers, Bashir Barghouthi, editor of *Al Talia* weekly, and Ali Khalili, a well-known writer and poet, and Sami Mar'i, a university professor from Haifa, summarised their presentations delivered at the conference. Khalili and Barghouthi were forbidden exit visas and could not attend. Their addresses were read in *in absentia*.

## Palestinian Culture in London

Partisans on all sides of the Middle East conflict often spend hours discussing the implications of the slightest move in the political arena. But whatever emotions the political aspect of the Palestinian cause arouses here in London — ranging from whole-hearted solidarity to ideological support through mild interest to outright hosility — the cultural life of the Palestinian nation has, until this week, been largely ignored. Very little about Palestinian culture actually reaches the West, whether in the form of literature, music, art, theatre or folk culture.

The seminars, exhibits and performances delivered by Palestinians gathered here from all over the world was a celebration of the diversity and richness of Palestinian culture. The success of the week with, on average, five well-attended programmes each day, was a tribute to the enormous efforts of the organisers.

On day one, Fawaz Zeidan described the energetic development of Palestinian theatre despite the many adversities and hardships it faces. He was followed by Anton Shelhat on the Arab image in Hebrew literature, showing how the characterisation of the Arab, and specifically the Palestinian, is distorted, dehumanised and brutalised in Hebrew literature in order to justify actual repression.

That evening, participants viewed the disturbing film "Under the Rubble," directed by Jean Chamoun and Mai Masri, about the Israeli 1982 invasion of Lebanon and the effects of the ruthless bombing of Beirut on its residents.

A musical show followed: pianist Patrick Lama, from Jerusalem, played a modern interpretation of traditional Palestinian music to the full house. Atallah Shufani, from Ailaboun, plucked the *'oud* and sang folk songs to the enthusiastic accompaniment of the audience.

The United Nations Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, November 29, went largely unnoticed in the British media but was marked at Friends House by a press conference chaired by PLO Representative in London Faisal Aweida and Yasir Abed Rabbo, head of the PLO Information Bureau and member of the Palestine National Council Executive Committee. Writer and *Al Ittihad* editor Emile Habibi and Yayha Yakhlouf, general secretary of the General Union of Palestinian Writers and Journalists, who currently resides in Damascus, also attended.

In the afternoon, Michael Adams, former director of CAABU and consultative editor of *Middle East International*, presented a paper by Bashir Barghouti, editor of *Al Talia*, on the Arab press under occupation. Barghouti, formerly under town arrest in Ramallah, was unable to attend. He detailed the various methods of harassment used by the Israeli authorities to obstruct the Arab press — preventing papers being delivered to the occupied territories, arresting and restricting journalists and editors and arbitrary censorship of news in the Arab press.

The highlight was the evening for Palestine, with an overflow crowd of 1200. International solidarity with the struggle of the Palestinian people rang out from the stage through bands from Grenada, Latin America and Azania-South Africa and included a Spanish dancer, an Eritrean dance group and two guitarist-singers from Scotland and Palestine. The festivities were rounded out by Atallah Shoufani, by popular demand, with the audience clapping and singing themselves hoarse until well after closing time.

On Wednesday, Assad Abd al-Rahman, a member of the PNC currently living in Kuwait, delivered a well-researched seminar on the history and development of the Palestinian National Movement, outlining its progress from 1967 until 1982 and emphasising its strength.

Palestinian artist Kamal Boulatta gave a stimulating talk on Palestinian painting, illustrated with slides of some of the best known and loved pictures by artists such as Suleiman Mansour, Leila Simes, Ismail Shammout and Jumana al-Husseini.

Later that day, Rita Giacaman, from the Health Clinic at Bir Zeit University, spoke about the particular problems facing women in the occupied territories, especially health problems. In outlining the history and development of the Palestinian women's movement from its beginning in 1929 until today, she pointed out the increasing politicisation of the village women and their efforts in fighting against oppression, both as Palestinians and as women. Giacaman's boundless energy imparted itself to her audience, who stayed behind to speak with the London-based group, Women for Palestine, who campaign for Palestinian women's issues here.

The second highlight of the week's events was a poetry reading, that evening, given by three leading Palestinian poets: Mahmoud Darwish, Samih al-Qassem and Mu'in Bseiso. Their poetry was introduced to the English-speaking members of the audience by Roger Hardy of *The Middle East* magazine, who read *ad* translated samples of their work, leaving the poets themselves to deliver their latest poems. Their effect on the audience can only be described as electrifying, confirming their standing as the foremost poets of the Palestinian resistance.

On the last day, Thursday, December 1, a paper on Palestinian culture in the occupied territories which was to have been given by *Al Fajr* literary magazine Editor Ali Khalili was instead presented by Mahmoud Qadri, since the former was unable to come to London.

Later in the afternoon, writer and editor Emile Habibi, from Haifa, delivered a lively and provocative talk entitled "Arab Cultural Life in Israel," describing the repressive influence of political Zionism on Palestinian political and cultural institutions within the 'green line'.

The week's events were brought to a close by Sami Mar'i, a Palestinian lecturer at Haifa University, talking in detail about Arab education in Israel and the many and various ways in which Palestinian Arabs within the 'green line' are discriminated against in the Israeli educational system, at all levels.

There were also book stands displaying a multitiude of literature on an around the Palestinian issue and a stand selling the latest edition of *Al Fajr* English newspaper, in which many people showed a keen interest.

The lively atmosphere, with exhibitions of paintings by artists Nasir al-Soumi, Jumana al-Husseini and Samir Salamah, an international poster competition, a Palestinian dress exhibition and stalls selling a variety of Palestinian folk art made this a week to remember — and certainly one to be repeated.

Poet Samih al-Qassem (left), artist Kamal Boulatta: a week to remember, and repeat.

Poet Samih al-Qassem, who joined two other poets, Mahmoud Darwish and Mu'in Bseiso, in an evening of poetry reading told *Al Fajr*, "The week was an event of Palestinian cultural activities in which our literary figures — poets, authors and intellectuals from everywhere — participated."

Sami Mar'i, a professor in Haifa, who gave a lecture entitled "Education and Palestinian Identity in Israel," said: "The week expressed a separate and complete Palestinian culture that included art, education, painting and Palestinian films. It was a pioneering experiment for our writers and intellectuals from every sector in Palestine and every political party. None of the participants tried to serve their own interests but all cooperated to serve and strengthen a Palestinian culture inherent in an independent Palestinian identity.

*Al Talia* editor Bashir Barghouti, who gave his address by proxy, had positive comments also: "The Palestinian cultural week shows part of the international solidarity (with the Palestinians) and helps to clarify the Palestinian national stand not in Britain alone but throughout the world. Holding this conference indicates the great level of recognition the PLO has won for legitimate Palestinian rights and the people's right to self-determination."

Another poet and writer, Ali Khalili, also had his paper on "Palestinian Culture in the Occupied Territories" read for him on the last day of the conference. The paper addressed the meaning of Palestinian culture, which the Israeli occupation ties to bury.

Several Palestinian writers and poets under occupation said they use vague symbolism to avoid censorship. This makes it more difficult for the critic to interpret, Khalili said in his expose of the censor's role in suppressing Palestinian writing.

Khalili said in his paper that in spite of the siege and the difficulties facing Palestinian culture, it has still grown. He pointed to the adoption by writers of the method of collective work in cultural and educational activites and the importance of writing for professional journals. "Writers are not intimidated by the various methods of terrorism, repression and detention," said Khalili.

Khalili also spoke about the cultural link between West Bank and Gaza writers with those in the Galilee and Triangle and the connection between local Palestinian literature and the literature of exile. "Local Palestinian culture has imposed itself on Israeli intellectuals as well," Khalili pointed out.

Sami Mar'i gave an in-depth analysis of Israel's political designs on the Palestinians. He said it is trying to weaken or even erase Palestinian identity through the educational programmes and the media, but he said the Israelis have failed to bury the Palestinian identity after 35 years.

Mar'i noted that 85 percent of the Arabs inside the 'green line' consider themselves Palestinians. But he cautioned that this does not mean the other 15 percent think of themselves as Israelis. "They are only afraid to express their feelings on their identity," he said.

Barghouti's paper addressed the problems of censorship and the stages of development of the Palestinian press in the occupied territories. He identified two stages: the first covers the period between 1972-78 when the Israelis tried to seduce a group of intellectuals in order to publicise Zionist policies and to start a new movement to replace the PLO. But because of the growth of national feelings and the social and economic changes inside the Palestinian society, this group played a wider role and joined the goals of the masses. This led to the second stage, which was the period of repression of the national press, characterised by increased censorship, the banning of newspapers, town arrests of journalists and restrictions on the movement of reporters, he concluded.

# WINDOW ON THE ARAB PRESS

The countdown for the departure of PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat and the Palestinian troops from the Lebanese port city of Tripoli and the Israeli bombing and shelling that accompanied it was the major focus of the local press, this week. Statements, editorials and analyses of the departure and the 'post-Tripoli era' figured prominently in all Palestinian papers.

The escalation of Israeli terror in the occupied territories was also given top coverage. All local papers ran stories about the discovery of unexploded bombs at Christian and Muslim religious institutions, as well as the latest blasts in Bethany.

## One Position to Confront the Present Conspiracy

While our people were busy with the fight in north Lebanon, conspiratorial elements increased their overt and covert efforts to strengthen their positions in our land and to create despair among our people in order to create the correct conditions to kill Palestinian rights or bargain over them.

It is difficult not to see the link between these efforts and the American-financed Israeli plan to raze the Palestinian camps, statements by Village League heads about a trip they plan to make soon to Jordan and the planting of bombs in Arab areas.

There is a long list of political, economic and military measures taken by different parties over the past several weeks which all attempt to take the Palestinian people's right to self-determination away from them. The current situation of the PLO gives these measures a chance to succeed.

Our people should not be fooled by statements of support for the PLO that come from some parties, particularly from the Jordanian regime, and by some people who use administrative, financial and repressive methods against those who do not support them.

If there is disagreement among Palestinians in the occupied territories on one issue or another, or on the way to deal with the differences existing outside, it should not be allowed to reach the point of disagreement over major issues, particularly self-determination and the PLO's representation of the Palestinian people.

**AL TALIA**
**December 15**

## The "Unknown" in US Aid to Israel

In compliance with the strategic cooperation agreement between the US and Israel, the American administration decided to ask the US Congress to approve a US$1.4 billion in military aid to Israel for fiscal 1985, all in grants.

The truth of the matter is that this figure, regardless of the fact that it forms the major part of US foreign aid, covers only a part of the real amount of aid Israel gets from the US. Some of the US aid takes an unofficial or indirect form, which makes the figures much higher than the declared numbers.

Here are some of the examples of this covert aid:

– Jewish organisations in the US collect donations for Israel, all tax-exempt;

– The US guarantees Israel's supply of crude oil until 1994, in case of any oil embargo against Israel;

– The US allows Israel to invest the aid in Israel itself when US law requires that the countries which receive aid from it have to spend it in buying American products only. But Israel, as we see, is one of the few nations exempted from this;

–The US considers Israel a developing nation, therefore allowing it to market its products in US markets at low tariff. This increases and encourages Israeli exports to the US.

As we said, these are only some of the examples of the real aid to Israel which exceeds the official figures.

The visit to the US by the Israeli 'civil administration' coordinator in the occupied territories, Binyamin Ben Eliezer, at an invitation from the American administration, was to discuss "improving the living standard of Palestinians in the occupied territories." Considering the purpose of the visit, we feel obliged to mention here that US aid to the occupied Arab land is negligible in comparison to the aid to Israel. This aid does not go above $6 million a year.

In any circumstances, what is needed from the US is not to increase its monetary aid to the occupied lands but to pressure Israel to change its hardline policy towards the Palestinians in these lands and eventually recognise their right to self-determination.

**AL FAJR**
**December 17**

## Rudeness

The basic characteristic of most Arab rulers is rudeness. The world "envies" us as we "enjoy" regimes with these and other rare characteristics. The two most recent examples of rudeness are an event and a statement covered in the media in the past few days.

The event is Lebanese President Amin Gemayel's visit to Libya. Gemayel, if you don't know him, is signatory to the submission agreement, the instigator of the "crusaders" war in Lebanon and a US agent. He is also the son of Pierre Gemayal, the brother of Bashir Gemayal, the head of the regime and sectarian army and one of the leaders of the separatist party in alliance with Israel.

We must now forget all these criticisms. Gemayal was received in western Tripoli, the centre of revolutions and Arab nationalism. Soon he will be received in Damascus. Both places are barred to someone like Yasir Arafat and the Palestinian fighters.

The statement came from Prince Sultan, Saudi Arabia's defence minister, who declared there would be full Arab participation in any war between Israel and any Arab nation. If he had stopped there, we would have understood this exaggeration, but he insisted on adding that US President Ronald Reagan's administration is probably the most understanding of Arab affairs.

We do not wish to comment on this statement because discussing it is an insult to the intellegience of Arab children, who know exactly how "understanding" Mr Reagan is of Arab affairs.

**AL SHA'AB**
**December 18**

## No Escape But to the Homeland

The Israeli Navy resumed its shelling of the Tripoli port, yesterday, in a final and desperate attempt to say "I am here." The Israeli leaders are acting like ignorant children who play with fire in their attitude towards the PLO's exodus from Tripoli. We call on the Israeli officials to understand, without the need for more tragedies, that this bloody "game" – the game of Palestinian-Syrian fighting in Tripoli – is over.

It is clear to us that the Israeli leaders did their best, publicly or discreetly, to prevent the inter-Arab fighting from coming to an end. Then came the Arab agreement to stop the fighting which disappointed all of them. They waited for the PLO to split, leaving no one to represent the Palestinian people except the Jordanian regime or its supporters (of the Israeli occupation) in the occupied territories.

What upsets this spoiled Israeli "child" is that Arab agreement was reached without its "consultation," as if it "does not exist." It is getting more upset as it sees more of such activities occurring. There are talks now in Damascus to bring about Lebanese national reconciliation.

If the Israeli leaders are not spoiled "children" when it comes to their Middle East policies, they would have read long ago what the result of their last aggression on Lebanon would be. Military might will not be able, in the end, to change the ways of history. This was the case in Vietnam, in Lebanon and everywhere, particularly in our time and in our East.

We call on the national (Israeli) leaders to realise that no matter how many Palestinian people will be forced to leave a place, they will not go to their graves but to their homeland – their independent state – the base for a just peace.

**AL ITTIHAD**
**December 19**

## Exodus

The chapter "Exodus" is one of the Bible's most well-known chapters. It details the story of the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and the Pharaoh's fierce stand against this exodus because he wanted to keep the Israelites, to enslave them and use them for hard labour.

The *Quran* also confirmed to a great extent the story of "Exodus." God ordered Moses first to try to persuade the Pharaoh with talk, and with no provocation. Then at God's orders, Moses used violent methods, and God sent blood, locusts and famine.

These disasters frightened the Pharaoh and his men, forcing him to let the Israelites leave. But soon after the Hebrews left, Pharaoh regretted his decision and wanted to return them to slavery. When he got to the Red Sea, he drowned, along with his men, and Moses and the Hebrews were saved.

If the Jews have one exodus chapter, the Palestinian people have more than one: the 1948 exodus, as refugees; 1967, 1970, as fighters; and 1982, as civilians and fighters. We are now about to witness the fifth exodus from Tripoli. Israel is the main cause of the first two, as well as the indirect cause of the third and the cause of the fourth. Syria, regretfully is the cause of the fifth.

But the Pharaoh, who did not allow the exodus of Israelites by peaceful means, returns again to stop the Palestinians from leaving Tripoli peacefully. This position is hard to explain.

**AL QUDS**
**December 20**

# 1192 Km Down, 8 to Go for Bethlehem Peace Pilgrims

A group of 20 US men and women peace campaigners are eight kilometres from reaching their t rget of walking 12,000 kilometres from the west coast of the United States to Bethlehem, in the West Bank. The pilgrims, who are protesting escalation of violence in the world and the nuclear arms race, will complete the final Jerusalem-Bethlehem leg of their walk on Christmas Eve, December 24.

Dean McFalls, the peace pilgrims' press coordinator, told *Al Fajr* that group members have developed a sense of solidarity with the Palestinian people, and especially residents of the West Bank refugee camps, during their march through the area in the past two week.

He said that the Palestinians were the most hospitable people they had visited.

McFalls said that every Palestinian they have met has pointed out that the PLO represents them. "And we feel that the PLO should be recognised as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people," he said.

McFalls says that the group was "pleasantly surprised" to learn of all the activities of the PLO. "We had a very distorted view of the PLO from the US media," he said.

Although McFalls said that the Bethlehem Peace Pilgrims could not support what he called "terrorism on either side," he said that the group understood that the Palestinian people are living in an environment of repression and violence. "We have witnessed and seen documented reports of a whole range of human rights violations," he pointed out.

McFalls blasted the Israeli settlements which he said suppress Palestinian culture and he supported the Palestinians' right to self-determination. "This could be in the form of an independent state or some sort of confederation," he qualified.

The spokesperson for the peace walkers said that the most appalling fact that struck them in their visit was the disproportionate amounts of US support to Israel and the Palestinians. McFalls said that for every US$0.06 of US aid to every Palestinian, an Israeli receives US$1000. He blamed the unjust situation in the West Bank on the responsibility of the United States. He also castigated US involvement in Lebanon.

The peace walkers' final eight kilometres will begin at 4:30 pm, Christmas Eve. After some hesitation,McFalls said that the public is invited to join in the march, which will start at the Nortre Dame Hotel, outside New Gate. In Bethlehem, the group expects a long meeting with Bethlehem Mayor Elias Freij, who has agreed to host the marchers.

# Andreotti Notes Differences With Israel Before Official Trip

by Livia Rokach

"Italy's position on the various aspects of the Middle East conflict and in particular on the central issue — the question of Palestine — and on the settlement policies in the occupied territories, does not coincide with that of Israel," Italian Foreign Minister Guilio Andreotti declared, December 21, during a foreign policy debate in the Senate on the eve of his departure for a three-day visit to Israel.

In his address to the Senate during the debate Andreotti, who in the course of the past two months held talks in Rome with Algerian President Chadli Ben Jadid and Egyptian Foreign Minister Kamal Hassan Ali, in addition to conferring in Damascus with Syrian President Hafez al-Assad and in Amman with King Hussein, exposed his views on the present situation in the Middle East as follows:

*The Question of Palestine:* remains the central issue of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and in this context the issue of the occupied territories has a major priority. In relation to the crisis in the PLO, "the political concept which must be clearly reaffirmed by Italy is that beyond the internal problems of the PLO, what is crucial to the effect of achieving a real peace in the region is that (the PLO) should have the consent of the Palestinian people and that this people in turn should be able to express this consent through a representative structure. Possibly the elected authorities of the occupied territories could concur in the formation (of such a representative structure)."

At this point Andreotti added that he received an official message of thanks from the PLO for the evacuation of Palestinians gravely injured in Tripoli on board an Italian ship.

It is also worth mentioning that in an article written for the weekly *L'Europeo*, Andreotti explained that it was just, in his opinion, that Italy should have limited itself to the evacuation of the wounded, "leaving to others the job of sending naval units to accompany the combatants... whose evacuation and further dispersion might be necessary but may also be questionable, since their return to the West Bank might have constituted a better contribution to the cause of an ultimate solution" — a statement which recalls that of the Egyptian regime, in August 1982, when it refused to take in the Palestinians, including civilians, who were forced to leave Beirut — and which at best smacks of the same kind of hypocrisy.

*US-Israeli Strategic Pact:* Andreotti reviewed the concern and preoccupation created throughout the Arab world — "including the Arab states closest to the US" — by the re-enforcement of the political-strategic cooperation between Israel and the US. "These preoccupations remain valid although the Americans have tried to cool down the unfavourable reactions by stating tha they are not intended against the Arab world but have the scope of containing Soviet expansionism in the Middle East." Far from giving an Italian judgement on either the pact or the American "explanation" of it, Andreotti went on to observe that "also due to contentious reports in regard to Shamir's meetings in Washington, which, as far as I know, do not correspond to the truth, there is a "new upsurge of anti-Americanism (presumably in the region — LR) which is a matter for concern."

*Lebanon:* During recent talks in Rome with Lebanon's Amin Gemayel, the latter expressed "a realistic and positive avaliability for contacts with the Syrian government and an appreciation for the constructive role played by Damascus during the reconciliation talks." On the other hand, "it is our opinion that for historical, geographic and cultural reasons, Syria cannot be excluded from the definition of a solution to be reached in Lebanon. That it should not be excluded does not mean, however, that it may be allowed to intervene unduly (in Lebanon)." The situation is, according to Andreotti, "fluid," with some possibility that a solution can be found through an internal Lebanese dialogue, a Lebanese-Syrian dialogue and a Syrian-American dialogue. The American bombings in Lebanon "should be considered as a sign of US determination not to leave unpunished attacks against its forces in that country."

*Soviet Reactions:* According to the Italian foreign minister, Moscow advised Damascus to handle Lebanese problems with extreme caution. It also exercised influence on Syria in the same sense, in regard to the internal crisis in the PLO." Both problems, according to Andreotti, were discussed at length and in detail, last Friday, "in a constructive talk between (Soviet Foreign Minister) Gromyko and the US ambassador to the Soviet Union."

*The relations between Italy and Israel, in this context:* The relations are "good". The Israelis have been told that "Italy seeks to be as objective as possible; that does not mean be indifferent. An unrenounceable point for Italy is not only that of Arab recognition of Israel's existence but also of Arab recognition for Israel's right to guarantee its stable security — obviously in connection also with a positive solution of the Palestinian problem.

## Thousands Visit Silwan Folk Art Exhibit

The Federation of Palestinian Women's Committees held a folk exhibit at Silwan Club, in Jerusalem, December 15, 16 and 17, attended by over 3000 people from all over the West Bank.

The exhibit had sections on popular folk heritage, including Beduin heritage, and a Beduin reception room, from which Arab coffee was distributed to visitors. Pictures and portraits were on display, and there were sections devoted to cassettes of national music, food and sweets and a sewing and embroidery section.

Material for the exhibit came from Gaza, Jerusalem, Ramallah, Hebron, Nablus, al-Bireh, Bethlehem and Jenin, including several villages and refugee camps. "This is the third exhibit arranged by the federation in the past two years of Palestinian women's committees," one organiser told *Al Fajr*. "It was successful."

The Palestinian women's committees held a music and *dabkeh* festival, at the Hilal Club in Jerusalem, December 19.

## Christmas Songs Aid Camp Kindergartens

The YWCA Jerusalem Chorus presented a Christmas concert, December 13 and 18, in Ramallah and Jerusalem. Proceeds of the concert were donated to kindergartens in Palestinian refugee camps.

The 50-person choir, which is directed by Salwa Tabri and includes local Palestinians and foreign residents, presented classical music of a Christmas spirit. Over 600 classical music fans attended the annual concerts at the Lutheran Church of Hope in Ramallah, December 13, and the YMCA in Jerusalem, December 18.

Among the concert soloists were Bir Zeit University's acting-President Dr Gabi Baramki and Friends Girls School Principal Nancy Nye. The concert included works of Mozart, Bach and the holiday standby, Handel's Messiah.

*continued from page 7*

# Nablus

portedly agreed to hold only day classes and not to sleep over at the site.

Islamic *waqf* officials followed standard procedure. They informed *waqf* headquarters in Jerusalem of the act. In Jerusalem, officials asked their lawyer to object to the illegal takeover and Islamic Supreme Council head Sa'ad al-Din al-Alami sent a telegramme of protest to Israeli officials.

Neither Alami nor *waqf* lawyers have received replies. Lawyer Issam Anani told *Al Fajr* that according to prevailing law, no resident can sue a settler. The only legal remedy, he says, is an objection to the Israeli Military Objections Committee. The committee's recommendations, according to prevailing law, have to be approved by the military governor before they can become binding. Anani says that the Military Objections Committee has had four sessions on the issue of the tomb without reaching a decision.

### Opportunists

Experts who follow the moves of Israeli settlers in the West Bank say that settler leaders wait for opportunities to dictate their plans to the Israeli authorities. These experts cite dozens of examples in which ultra-right wing fanatics of the Gush Emunim dictated plans which later became official policy in Hebron, Nablus, Bethlehem and Gaza. In this context, settler leaders like Levinger and Elyakim Haetzim were quick to take advantage of the stabbing of Yosef Stern, a Jewish settler, in Nablus's vegetable market. Their plans were prepared. All that was needed was an excuse. On November 28, it came.

First, a meeting of settler leaders at the Bracha settlement, in Nablus, where Stern lived, revved up emotions and the decision was taken to go into the Joseph's Tomb site and set up a permanent headquarters there. Then two tents were squeezed into the tiny back yard of the site, and settler leaders made public statements to the effect that the site of Joseph's Tomb would become a permanent headquarters from which they would "monitor attacks on settlers throughout the West Bank."

A visit by former Israeli Defence Minister and present minister without portfolio Ariel Sharon gave cabinet-level credibility to the plan.

Of course the military government, which has to reply to Nablus residents' complaints and the protests of Peace Now activists, continued to claim that the settlers had no right to stay at the central Nablus site overnight.

Neighbours were directly affected by the settlers' moves. Besides the provocation of the presence of dozens of Israeli military and para-military vehicles, a number of residents complained of actual harassment by the uninvited guests. Residents report being stopped and searched in front of their own homes. They no longer use the main Askar road, which runs in front of the site, because of such increased harassment and provocations.

Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Arens, after long meetings with the settlers, reportedly convinced them to abandon their plans. Residents say that the overnight episodes have decreased but insist that large numbers of settlers continue to be present throughout the day. Israeli media reports last week also said that some settlers are also staying at the tomb overnight.

The big question in Nabulsi minds is what Arens promised the settlers in return for their broken pledge to leave the new site at night. Locals report that for a long time settlers have hoped to get possession of the next door Mazuz al-Masri school. "Could this be the next move, and has Arens already sanctioned it?" they wonder.

# WEEKLY REVIEW

**December 13, 1983**

### NO UNRWA–BEN PORAT LINK

VIENNA — An UNRWA press release said the Palestinian refugee aid organisation has nothing to do with the plans to resettle Palestinian refugees in the West Bank and Gaza announced recently by Israeli minister without portfolio Mordechai Ben Porat. UNRWA said it does not oppose anything the refugees choose to do to improve their status but will strongly oppose any measure taken to force them to change.

### TWO FIREBOMBS IN RAMALLAH

JERUSALEM — Two firebombs were thrown at an Israeli military vehicle in Ramallah. No damage was done, Israeli authorities claimed. Several people were rounded up following the attack.

### SECOND EXCHANGE UNDERWAY

GENEVA — The PLO representative in Geneva, Nabil Ramlawi, said negotiations are currently being conducted for the exchange of 1150 Palestinian prisoners held by Israel in return for the bodies of Israeli soldiers killed in Lebanon. Ramlawi confirmed that 37 prisoners from Ansar and two from Israeli prisons were not released by Israel in the November 24 prisoner exchange.

### THREE SILWAN YOUTHS ARRESTED

TEL AVIV — *Ma'ariv* said three youths from the village of Silwan were arrested after they were found in possession of firebombs.

### HOUSE DEMOLISHED IN NABI SAMUEL

JERUSALEM — A house owned by Adel Abed in Nabi Samuel was demolished for not having a building permit. The owner has tried to get a permit since 1977. His eight-member family previously lived in a cave.

**December 15, 1983**

### BOMB IN BETHLEHEM

BETHLEHEM — A bomb went off in front of a store in Ma'ali Street. No injuries were reported. Another bomb was found in the same street after the police arrived on the scene and searched the area.

### SHAMIR: SETTLEMENTS WILL CONTINUE

TEL AVIV — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir told settlers in the West Bank that Israel is determined to continue efforts at building settlements in the West Bank and Gaza. Shamir said he was pleased with settlement expansion.

### PRISONER RELEASED THEN DEPORTED

SILWAD — Political prisoner Abbas Saleh was released from jail after serving 15 years of his 45-year term and immediately exiled to Jordan. No reason was given.

### HA'ARETZ: 63 PRISONERS NOT RELEASED

TEL AVIV — *HaAretz*, quoting a Red Cross spokesperson, said 63 Palestinian prisoners held by Israel whose names appeared on the list of those to be released in the exchange of prsioners with the PLO were not set free.

**Palestinian scouts march Jerusalem streets on *mawlad al-nabi*, the Prophet Mohammed's birthday. Nine scout groups participated in the Jerusalem festivities./AO photo**

**December 14, 1983**

### YOUTHS GIVEN HARSH SENTENCES

TEL AVIV — The military court in Nablus sentenced 14 youths from Qabatyah village to jail terms of between two and three years for stoning Israeli vehicles and throwing a firebomb at a police car, according to *HaAretz* newspaper.

### TAXED IN PERSON

TULKARM — One Tulkarm merchant was ordered to pay IS400,000 in taxes during a raid by Israeli officials on city stores.

### PROFESSIONAL UNIONS CONDEMN RESETTLEMENT PLAN

JERUSALEM — The Federation of Professional Unions in the West Bank issued a statement condemning the Israeli plan to resettle Palestinian refugees in the West Bank and Gaza. The statement said: "The problem of the Palestinian refugees is a political one and therefore cannot be resolved separately from a political solution honouring UN resolutions and the rights of the Palestinian people."

### POW EXCHANGE ANGERS ICRC

HAIFA — The International Committee of the Red Cross issued a statement accusing Israel of holding back 37 Palestinian prisoners who were to be released among the prisoners exchanged, November 24. The statement said the Red Cross might not intervene in any more prisoner exchanges. It said Red Cross credibility has been damaged because of Israel's actions.

### THREE SENTENCED

JERUSALEM — Three Palestinians from Barqa village, near Nablus, were sentenced for planting a bomb near a gas station on the Jenin-Tulkarm road. Hazem Farghoniya was given nine years, three suspended; Arafat Salah, eight years, three suspended; and Ja'afar Abu Omar, six years, three suspended.

### PIRACY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

NORTH LEBANON — Palestinian sources in Tripoli said a ship carrying 20 Palestinians was hijacked by an Israeli warship.

### NEW REFUGEE ID'S

JERUSALEM — Informed sources at the UNRWA said the international organisation will issue new cards for Palestinian refugees in the West Bank, beginning January 1.

### HABASH CALLS FOR COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP

DAMASCUS — George Habash, general secretary of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, called for a collective leadership to run the PLO.

### JENIN STORES CHEAPER

JENIN — Bidding for a new group of Jenin stores owned by the *waqf* showed a sharp decline from the previous record. The new stores were leased for 50-70 percent of the JD18-36,000 prices offered earlier in the year.

### JOURNALIST RESTRICTION RENEWED

BETHLEHEM — The Israeli military renewed a town arrest order on Hamdi Faraj who lives in Dheisheh refugee camp. Faraj is a member of the administrative committee of the Arab Journalists Association and ended a previous six-month restriction last month.

### FOUR RAMALLAH YOUTHS JAILED

TEL AVIV — Israel Radio said four Ramallah youths were sentenced from six to nine months on charges of taking part in demonstrations, throwing stones at Israeli military vehicles, burning tyres in the streets and setting up roadblocks.

### BOMB HOAX

RAMALLAH — An unidentified caller telephoned Aziz Shaheen School for Girls in Ramallah and told them there was a bomb in the building. Israeli soldiers searched the school but nothing was found.

### EGYPTIANS CHARGE HARASSMENT

TEL AVIV — The Egyptian Embassy in Tel Aviv complained of several recent incidents in which embassy property was damanged and personnel assaulted.

### FIREBOMB NEAR CONSULATE

TEL AVIV — Israel's counsul in Alexandria, Egypt said a firebomb was thrown at a car standing outside the consulate's gate three days ago. The consul said no one was hurt and the perpetrator was arrested.

**December 16, 1983**

### PALESTINIAN FINED FOR VIOLATING TOWN ARREST

NAZARETH — A Nazareth court fined Omar Said, from Kufr Kana, IS1000 and sentenced him to a two-month suspended jail term for violating a town arrest order.

Police said he did not appear at the police station at exactly 8:00 am in the morning to prove his presence in the village. Said said he arrived late because of transportation problems.

### BOMB FOUND IN QATANA

JERUSALEM — A powerful time bomb was discovered in the village of Qatana, near Jerusalem. Police were called in to detonate it.

### SETTLERS STONE PALESTINIANS

Settlers from Gilo settlement, near Bethlehem, stoned a car driven by Mohammed Yusef al-Sheikh as he passed the settlement. The car was damaged and one passenger was wounded and required hospitalisation.

### SETTLER GETS REDUCED SENTENCE

TEL AVIV — The Israeli High Court reduced a prison term given to a settler from Kiryat Arba convicted of shooting at a Palestinian man in al-Bireh on July 4, last year. The man was wounded in the back.

The court, which reduced the sentence from one year to six months, said the accused is a "straight man" who lost control over himself during the incident and showed remorse afterwards.

### BETHLEHEM U. CELEBRATES TEACHERS DAY

BETHLEHEM — The Social Club at Bethlehem University celebrated Palestinian Teacher's Day. A national song festival, a play and other cultural events were staged.

### PUNISHED FAMILIES SUFFERING

HEBRON — The familes whose homes were demolished on orders from the Israeli military last week as punishment for their children's political activities, have been facing great difficulty without proper shelter in the cold weather. Some of the families, all with eight to 14 members, have been living with neighbours or relatives. One family set up a tent in front of their demolished house.

### UN: FREE ABU AIN

UNITED NATIONS — The General Assembly in the UN adopted several resolutions on the situation in the Israeli-occupied territories, one demanding the release of Palestinian prisoner Ziad Abu Ain. The resolution on Abu Ain

was approved by 110 to two (the US and Israel) and 29 abstentions. He was listed on the POW exchange list but not freed by Israel.

### FIDA' OUT OF HOSPITAL

WEST BANK — Fida' Bahash, the nine-year-old Nablus child wounded in the settler shooting incident in which her sister Aisheh, 11, died, December 8, was released from hospital after two operations for head wounds.

### EITAN: THE PALESTINIANS SHOULD DISAPPEAR

TEL AVIV — Former Israeli Chief-of-Staff Rafael Eitan told students at Bar Ilan University, Tel Aviv, that the Palestinian fighters in north Lebanon should "disappear," and very fast. He said they will disappear sooner if they stay in Tripoli.

## December 17, 1983

### GRENADE EXPLOSION

TEL AVIV — A hand grenade exploded in a car in Natanya, north of Tel Aviv, Israel Radio said. Damage to the car and another behind it was extensive. The radio said the grenade was of Israeli Army issue.

### NABLUS STORES RE-OPENED

NABLUS — The Israeli military allowed store owners in the Nablus central market area to reopen their shops. They have been closed for over a week.

## December 18, 1983

### GRENADE IN QALQILIYA

QALQILIYA — A hand grenade was thrown on an Israeli vehicle in Qlaqiliya, destroying the car. Several city residents were rounded up immediately afterwards. No report of casualties was given.

### MAYOR NASR INTERROGATED

QALQILIYA — Qalqiliya Mayor Amin Nasr was summoned by the Israeli military and questioned about leaving the city without prior knowledge of the police, in violation of his town arrest order.

### SCARES IN SCHOOLS

HEBRON — Two Hebron schools received calls from unknown individuals claiming there were time bombs in the two schools that would explode within 30 minutes.

The schools were evacuated and the police called. The area was searched, but no bombs were discovered.

### BODY FOUND

WEST BANK — The body of Mahmoud Abu Bakr, from the village of Kufr al-Lubbad, was found near the Bala'a forest. Abu Bakr apparently died of gunshot wounds.

### ART ACTIVIST ARRESTED

JERUSALEM — Hayyan Ja'abeh, administrative committee member of the Theatre and Folklore Center at the Arab Thought Forum, in Jerusalem, was recently arrested. No reason was given for the arrest.

### TAXATION PROTESTED

JERUSALEM — The East Jerusalem Chamber of Commerce protested the city council's 300 percent tax increase for city residents by the Israeli municipality.

### TRAVEL EXPENSES UP

TEL AVIV — The Israeli Knesset committee for economic affairs decided to increase tax on overseas travel for Israeli residents to US$125 per ticket.

Two of three cars set alight in Wadi Joz, in the early hours of December 21, by unidentified arsonists./AO photo

### FAKE BOMB AT BUS STATION

TEL AVIV — The Israeli daily *Yediot Aharanot* reported that a suspicious package was found at Jerusalem's central bus station. After the area was closed and the package opened it was found to be a fake bomb.

### NAJAH TRIPLE TWINNING

JERUSALEM — Najah University was twinned to three American universities. The university's public relations director, Sa'ab Araqat, said the agreement was signed in principle with Oregon State University, in Portland, Arizona State University and the University of California, at Davis.

### TEACHERS PROTEST PAY WITHHOLDING

RAMALLAH — Teachers in the Ramallah area protested new Israeli orders whereby teachers at closed schools will not be paid for the period the school remains closed. In a petition they sent to the military's education officer, the teachers said this order violates laws in the West Bank.

### ISRAELI GROUP VOLUNTEERS WORK

JERUSALEM — Members of the Israeli Committee for Solidarity with Bir Zeit University volunteered at Dheisheh refugee camp to help surface a camp street.

The Israeli Army arrived at the camp 30 minutes after the volunteers started working and ordered them to leave, claiming the camp is a closed military area. Two committee members and some foreign television crew members were detained after they refused to obey the orders.

### LAND CONFISCATED

JERUSALEM — More than 20 families from the Ramallah village of 'Abwein received notices from the Israeli government that their property in the village has been confiscated. The area confiscated adds up to 3750 dunums, most of which is farm land and the only source of income for the families.

### STUDENT UNDER TOWN ARREST

JERUSALEM — A Polytechnic Institute student, Firas Yaghi, was placed under town arrest at his village, Bani Na'im, for the third consecutive time. Yaghi lost one school year because of this restriction and now may lose another.

## December 19, 1983

### ISRAELI CARS STONED

Israel Radio reported residdents from Am'ari camp, near Ramallah, stoned Israeli cars passing near it. Windows of two buses were destroyed, but no one was hurt.

### TIREH SUSPENDED

RAMALLAH — The Womens Teachers College administration announced the closure of the two-year college for two weeks. The announcement came after several students demonstrated and burnt tyres in the street to protest the crisis in Tripoli, and the Ramallah military governor warned the school against further activities.

### BUS VICTIM DIES

TEL AVIV — The death toll of the Jerusalem bus explosion on December 6 rose to six when one of the injured died in hospital.

### DOCTOR JAILED

NABLUS — The Israeli military court in Nablus sentenced Dr Hassan Khreisha to a four-year prison term, two of which are suspended, on charges of membership in the PLO Fatah group. Khreisha used to work at the National Hospital, in Zarqa, Jordan.

### SUICIDE IN ISRAELI JAIL

TEL AVIV — Israel Radio said an Egyptian citizen was found dead in his cell in Eilat prison. The radio said the Egyptian crossed from Jordan to Israel looking for work but was arrested and fined IS1500 or two days in prison. The cause of death was ruled suicide.

### DISCRIMINATION AMONG JEWS

TEL AVIV — The Israeli *HaAretz* newspaper said yesterday tension was high in the northern Israeli town of Safad because of objections by town residents to new Jewish arrivals from Ethiopia who want to settle there. The Orthodox Jews in Safad to not accept Ethiopia's black Jews as authentic.

### DOCTOR DISMISSED

TULKARM — The Israeli military stopped an intern, Dr Hikmat Sa'id, at Tulkarm Hospital from continuing his work there. No reason was given for this decision. The doctor was previously arrested, October 18, when he returned home after completing his studies in Rumania.

### UNRWA SCHOOL REOPENED

KALANDIA — Studies resumed at Kalandia Technical School after a two-month closure. The school was ordered closed by the military government following demonstrations to protest Syrian-Libyan attacks on the PLO.

UNRWA

## December 20, 1983

### SETTLERS DEFY COURT ORDER

WEST BANK — Settlers at Allar, near Tulkarm, defied a High Court order that they stop building a settlement on Palestinian property. The settlers continued work on the land in the village.

### FRENCH AID TO NABLUS

NABLUS — Several Nablus residents telephoned Dr Hatim Abu Ghazzaleh, head of the Palestinian-French Friendship Organisation, and asked him to convey his appreciation to the French government on its air and sea protection of the PLO fighters leaving Tripoli.

### SPECIAL PASSPORTS WITHDRAWN

WEST BANK — The Jordanian authorities at the bridges are withdrawing the special passports issued to Jordanian officials in order to facilitate their work. A ministerial decision said the passports will be given only to ministers, members of Parliment and high-ranking officials.

### GROOM ARRESTED ON WEDDING NIGHT

JERUSALEM — Samir Abd al-Hafiz, from Yamon, near Jenin, was arrested during his wedding party when national songs were sung at the wedding.

### FIVE YOUTHS FINED

RAMALLAH — Five youths from the village of Battir, near Bethlehem, were fined IS3000 each on charges of possessing banned books.

### SHAKA'A URGES UNITY

NABLUS — Nablus' elected Mayor Bassam Shaka'a urged PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat to work hard to reunite Palestinian ranks now that he is out of Tripoli.

### INFANT FOUND ABANDONED

NAZARETH — A one-day-old infant was found abandoned in a suitcase in the Nazareth vegetable market.

Urban planning in Jerusalem always has political overtones. In probing reports of plans designed to cover the pre-1967 no-man's-land around the Damascus Gate, *Al Fajr's* **Daoud Kuttab** uncovered a complex web of intrigue involving Israeli officials and US university students.

# 'The Seam Plan' for Jerusalem: New Blueprints, Old Motives

Israeli attempts to make substantive changes in the fabric of East Jerusalem are not new to local Palestinians, so the announcement of plans to redesign the one area that had remained pretty much untouched since the 1967 war comes as no surprise. The once busy commercial centre in the area between the Damascus and New Gates was devastated in 1948 and remained no-man's-land ever since the partition of Palestine. But according to reliable reports, Israeli officials seem to have found the money and the plans to cover over this dividing line between the two halves of the city.

According to reliable Israeli sources, US evangelist Harold Baker has given the Israelis US$3.5 million to develop the no-man's-land. But Baker's contribution has strings attached. He wants the Damascus Gate bus station removed and some kind of park, or an extension to the adjacent Garden Tomb, constructed.

Garden Tomb officials have denied any relations with Baker and say they have no plans to expand the present boundaries of the Garden Tomb.

## The Plan

Israeli municipal officials have been itching since 1967 to execute some kind of grand plan for the areas outside the Old City walls. For years the municipality was involved in planning a massive project for the zone outside Jaffa Gate. The project, called the Mamila Plan, was aimed at the construction of a large business district but collapsed after 15 years of wrangling, and now the municipality plans a modest project there.

With the Mamila Plan scratched, the only open space left for city engineers was the strip outside the Damascus and New Gates. According to Israeli journalists who spoke to *Al Fajr*, the Kollek administration in the Jerusalem municipality wants to "cover up the signs of the former boundaries between East and West Jerusalem and make a point of the connection between the French Hill settlement and the Jaffa Road business district."

In order to ensure the political aspects of the plan were included, West Jerusalem municipality city engineer Amnon Niv drew up the basic scheme, labelled "the seam plan." The central aspect of it is a major six-lane highway to be named Road No. 1, to connect north Jerusalem settlements with downtown West Jerusalem. They then called in three US engineers to draw up the final details. East Jerusalemites charge the Americans are merely a fig leaf to try to defuse local sensitivities. The engineers, Gene Dyer, Todd Johnson and Clifton Page, all Harvard University students, drew up the grand plan for the area. Engineers who saw the Dyer-Johnson-Page plan say that the basics of city engineer Amnon Niv's plan are very noticeable. Despite the Harvard team's repeated denials, most experts believe they were "coached" on what to put into it.

Last week, the new plan was presented to a selected group of East Jerusalem Arabs and an Israeli group at different sittings. No Arab journalists were given access to the plans.

One of the Israelis who saw the plan, former Jerusalem municipal engineer Arthur Kushner, told *Al Fajr* that the majority in the Israeli audience "were highly critical."

Kushner himself is sceptical of the whole concept. "You don't unite people through buildings and streets," he said, pointing out that political, national, religious or economic differences cannot be solved by nice buildings.

Kushner outlined his views on a number of basic errors in the plan fr that calls for covering the bus station with a row of arcades. "The nice-looking buildings are simply camouflage for the an urban design point of view. "The high-rise institutional buildings planned for the area outside Damascus Gate will destroy the view of the approach to the Old City. They will block the sequence of movement." Kushner also complained about the inclusion of the bus station in the plan." Busses and bus terminals have an inflexible use. You cannot adjust them to restricted areas because they need wide (turning circles)," claimed Kushner.

The former city engineer also scoffed at the Harvard engineers' plan mistakes underneath."

Kushner simply feels that the whole project is unnecessary. He points out it doesn't even serve Mayor Teddy Kollek's stated intentions. "A bus station is not a place for people to integrate," he said. Kushner believes that having the area as some kind of open-space park would be much more beneficial and is quite necessary. Kushner also dismisses the six-lane highway, pointing out, "The main purpose of the highway is to serve the interests of the north Jerusalem settlements."

Arthur Kushner, who quit his job at the Jerusalem municipality in professional disgust soon after the Israeli occupation in 1967, wrote a book entitled *The New Jerusalem Planning and Politics*. He said in it that "in Jerusalem, it is the politicians who plan." Referring to the involvement of US Christian money in the new project Kushner says, "Now it is not only local politics but also international politics that is involved."

## Bus Station

One of the prominent features of the Harvard students' project is the moving of the Damascus Gate bus station. This ties in with the rumours about the Christian's demand for an expanded Garden Tomb. The bus station land and the buildings around it are the property of the Islamic *waqf*, which leased it to the then-Jordanian Jerusalem municipality some 30 years ago. The lease ran out last month.

**Above, outside Old City walls near Damascus Gate, the focal point of Kollek's latest plan. Below, Israeli bulldozers level warehouses belonging to Ahmad Jabsheh in Musrarah shortly after the '67 war.**

Negotiations between the Kollek municipality and the *waqf* have been underway for some months. Israeli municipal officials have told Israeli journalists that the *waqf* officials are "amenable" to the move. But *waqf* director Hassan Tahboub assured *Al Fajr* that no deals have been made.

Israeli sources have mentioned that a deal has been discussed to exchange the land of the present bus station for a plot where the new terminal station is planned. Official minutes of the meetings between the two groups show that Tahboub was to go back to the Supreme Islamic Council to discuss the new plan.

*Waqf* lawyer Issam Anani conceded that it would be difficult to force the municipality not to move the station. But he assured *Al Fajr*, "We will try to stop it from destroying the buildings used for business purposes. East Jerusalem merchants are in sore need of expansion space for their businesses.

## Business Offices

Municipal officials who showed the new plan to East Jerusalem businessmen reportedly said it will relieve the limitations on expansion of their businesses. Fayeq Barakat, the head of the Arab Chamber of Commerce in Jerusalem, was invited along with three other businessmen to see the project, the day after the Israelis saw it. He told *Al Fajr* that they were informed the scheme "is just an idea drawn up by Harvard students and it will probably be years and years before it is accepted by the municipality."

Israeli engineer Arthur Kushner rejected this. "The municipality will ask for some changes on the plan but will formally submit it to the planning council within a few months," he said.

In regard to the business district, Barakat said that the Harvard students' plan calls for a commercial section outside Damascus Gate. Barakat said that the Arab affairs advisor in the muncipality, Morris Zelkha, assures them that it will be for Arabs. However, a number of Israeli experts doubt that statement. According to *The Jerusalem Post*, the three Harvard planners recommend setting up a body to ensure Israelis and Palestinians get a half of the new central complex each.

An Israeli journalist with sources close to the Jerusalem municipality says that probably most of it will go to Israeli businesses.

Whatever happens, the business district will be leased at high rents, which will mean that it will only be open to wealthier individuals and concerns.

Israeli newspaper reports say the Arab business community accepts the new plan. But those who attended the meeting say they rejected most of the ideas in it. Barakat reportedly told the planners that if the bus station had to be moved it should be turned into a business district. "We are in sore need of room to expand the present business district," he said.

The Arab businessmen also criticised the new highway. "The highway is unnecessary and will take Arab land," said Barakat.

## Land Ownership

Many Arab landowners would lose their lands and property if the new plan goes through. The lands on which the Kollek municipality wants to erect its projects belong to the Jabsheh, Khioh, Dusdar, Najar and Shibr families as well as to the Russian Orthodox church. A number of the landowners have hired lawyers and plan to protest the project as soon as it is formally introduced.

Ahmad Jabsheh, who owns three dunums in the Musrara area and runs a tobacco shop in East Jerusalem, said, "During the period between 1948 and '67 the Jordanian government did not allow us to use our 15 stores which were in the no-man's-land, despite the fact that on the Israeli side they used the properties there." After the '67 war, Jabsheh went to the district commander and asked if he could open the shops. The commander agreed, he says, but after he painted and renovated them, Israeli bulldozers came at night and levelled them.

Jabsheh says, "Now the municipality leases out the land to watermelon merchants and is making plans to build a business district on my land." Despite their plans to protest the new scheme, most Arab landowners are sceptical of success. "If the judge is your enemy who do you go to?" said landowner Rajai Khioh quoting a popular Arabic proverb.